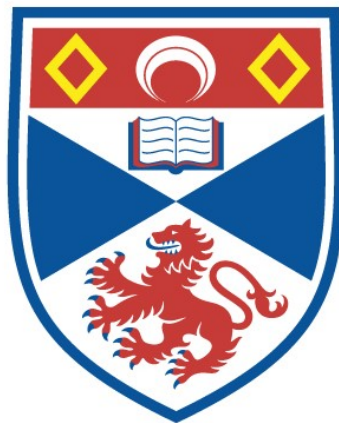


THE QUEST FOR LEGITIMACY: THE EGYPTIAN STATE FROM NASSER TO SISI

Ahmed Fahmy Shahin

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



2017

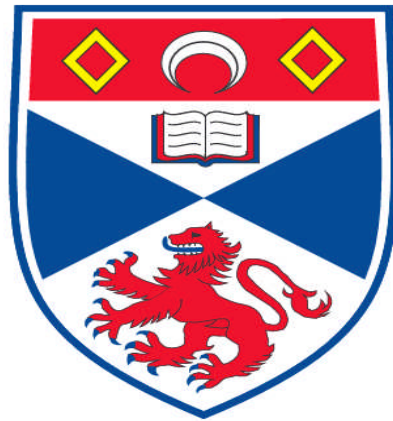
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St Andrews

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April 2017

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PhD Thesis

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	6
Acknowledgments.....	7
Declarations.....	11
Note on Transliteration.....	14
<u>Chapter One: Introduction, Analytical Framework, and Methodology</u>	15
1.1 Introduction.....	15
1.2 Theoretical Review.....	18
1.2.1 The Debate on Democracy and authoritarianism.....	19
1.2.2 Beyond the dichotomy of democratisation vs. authoritarianism.....	21
1.2.3 Different Explanatory Approaches: Hybrid Regimes and Populist and post- populist Authoritarianism.....	23
1.3 Research Questions.....	27
1.4 Conceptual Approach: Legitimacy.....	28
1.4.1 What is legitimacy?.....	28
1.4.2 Where does legitimacy come from?.....	30
1.4.3 What sources of legitimacy are most paramount in Egypt’s political system? How this thesis will approach legitimacy?.....	32
1.4.3.1 Eudaemonic legitimacy.....	34
1.4.3.2 Ideological legitimacy.....	35
1.4.3.3 Institutional legitimacy.....	38
1.4.4 Who grants legitimacy?.....	40
1.4.4.1 <i>Hezb el-kanaba</i> (Couch Party).....	41
1.4.4.2 The youth of the middle class (YMC).....	42
1.4.4.3 Islamists.....	44
1.5 Methodology.....	45
1.6 The thesis argument as developed through its chapters.....	47
<u>Chapter Two: Founding the Benchmarks of Legitimacy</u>	51
2.1 The political economy of legitimacy.....	51
2.2 The power of ideology.....	56
2.3 Why democracy did not matter?.....	60

2.4. Conclusion.....	63
<u>Chapter Three: Transformation for Adaptation (1967-1981)</u>	64
3.1 The Crisis of legitimacy.....	64
3.2 Sadat's Adaptation Strategies.....	66
3.2.1 From welfarism to infitah.....	67
3.2.2 Egypt-First.....	71
3.2.3 Bringing democracy back in?.....	75
3.3 Conclusion.....	76
<u>Chapter Four: Mubarak's Legacy I, Institutional Legitimacy First</u>	78
4.1 The semi-open society.....	78
4.2 The Seeds of Neoliberalism.....	82
4.3 Moderate Foreign Policy and Fighting Terrorism.....	87
4.3.1 Foreign Policy.....	88
4.3.2 Political Islam and Fighting Terrorism.....	90
4.3.3 Mubarak's personal legitimacy.....	93
4.4 Conclusion.....	94
<u>Chapter Five: Mubarak's Legacy II, The 'Tawreeth' Project</u>	97
5.1 Gamal Mubarak and the 'tawreeth' project.....	97
5.1.1 Gamal Mubarak and his associates.....	98
5.1.2 Political liberalisation or introducing the 'tawreeth'?.....	104
5.1.3 The Army and the <i>tawreeth</i>	107
5.2 The Heavy Costs of Foreign Policy.....	110
5.3 The Bitterness of Neoliberalism.....	114
5.4 Conclusion.....	119
<u>Chapter Six: The Collapse of Legitimacy, The January Uprising</u>	120
6.1 The Middle Class.....	120
6.1.1 <i>Hezb el-Kanaba</i> : The Victims of Neoliberalism.....	120
6.1.2 The youth of the middle class (YMC): Explosion of Expectations.....	123
6.1.3 Legitimising the Muslim Brotherhood.....	128

6.2 Contentious Politics in the 2000s.....	132
6.3 Conclusion.....	136
 <u>Chapter Seven: The Vacuum of Legitimacy, Post-Uprising Egypt</u>	138
7.1 Introduction.....	138
7.2 Bringing ideological legitimacy back in: from consensus on democracy to contest over identity..	139
7.2.1 Revolutionaries Vs. Conservatives.....	139
7.2.2 Seculars Vs. Islamists.....	141
7.3 The road to negative legitimacy: from contest over identity to quasi-civil war.....	147
7.4 Negative legitimacy: security for consent.....	154
7.5 Conclusion.....	159
 <u>Chapter Eight: Conclusion</u>	160
8.1 Implications of the Research.....	160
8.1.1 The First Implication.....	160
8.1.2 The Second Implication.....	161
8.1.3 The Third Implication.....	163
8.1.4 The Fourth Implication.....	165
8.1.5 The Fifth Implication.....	166
 <u>Bibliography</u>	167

Abstract

Egypt could be described as a unique case in the region with regard to Arab Uprisings. Egypt appears to be the only country in the Arab Uprisings states that tread on a different path. It survived the revolutionary wave without neither collapse nor sustainably democratise. Hence was the idea of this research: how could one explain the Egyptian case?

I attempt to analyse the Egyptian politics through the lenses of legitimacy. Thus, this thesis studies the legitimacy of the postcolonial Egyptian state. It aims to show that through studying legitimacy; the reasons and dynamics behind the regime change/stability and the underlying logic of political change in Egypt could be understood. To achieve this goal, this thesis analyses the concept of legitimacy and its application on Egypt's contemporary history. Three basic sources of legitimacy are identified as the most crucial in terms of their impact on political change in Egypt: eudaemonic, institutional, and ideological legitimacy.

I argue that legitimacy is linked to state-formation: The relative weights of the abovementioned legitimacy components vary from one state-formation's phase to the other, as every phase structurally determines which component is more important than the other, or, in other words, the phase of state formation invites the relevant type of legitimacy component for the ruler to rely on. However, each ruler indeed can choose the proper legitimacy type that fits the state-formation's phase the country is going through, or avoid it and use, to the detriment of his rule, other legitimacy types. In this regard, Nasser created benchmarks of legitimacy that his predecessors found themselves obliged to, at least, not to ignore, otherwise facing the wrath of the people. Sadat and Mubarak attempted to rely more on institutional legitimacy to make for their decreasing levels of eudaemonic and ideological legitimacy.

Although democratic legitimacy (a branch of institutional legitimacy) gained primacy after the Arab uprising in Egypt and the collapse of the Mubarak regime, many factors with the limitations of democratic legitimacy on the top of them caused the collapse of the political sphere after the brief democratic opening. Without a wide consensus on the state identity and the limits of the use of power, electoral democracy helps only to embody the deep divisions in the nation especially on the identity lines. This thesis thus argues that legitimacy, with its three component, is a pre-requisite to full sustainable democratisation.

Acknowledgments

Scene number 1

When I started my PhD, my daughter, Lujayna, was 5 years old. She had no idea what I was doing for heaven's sake. She is now 11 years old, and she was the one who orally reviewed my work with me on the night of the Viva's day. She surprisingly understood the meaning of 'legitimacy' and applied it to many day-to-day situations and cases, including her relation with her teachers and even her parents!

For Lujayna I dedicate not only this thesis but also my whole life. I wish that this work would someday compensate her for the time I was busy working on this thesis. I also express my deep thanks to Nagla El-Baz, Lujayna's mother. Nagla is a unique person, and has been and will always be, one of my dearest friends. Thank you Nagla. May all your dreams come true and may you lead a life full of happiness and fulfillment. In the same context, I dedicate this work to the memory of Dr. Mohamed El-Baz, Lujayna's late grandfather and my God Father. Dr. Mohamed's love and support are unforgettable. His genius, sense of humor and big heart, will never be taken from my soul. My love for him, alive and dead, is eternal.

Scene number 2

One day, 7 years ago, I was a master's student at Durham. My mind was busy though with the PhD. I had a dream to work under the supervision of the great Ray Hinnebusch. Hinnebusch was the first reason why I loved political analysis whether of international relations or political economy and comparative politics. His writings on Syria, Egypt and the Middle East politics were a major source of inspiration for me throughout my entire academic life.

On that distant night of February 4th 2010, I was in the Durham University library, trying to draft a PhD research proposal to send it to Ray Hinnebusch. I worked for 10 consecutive hours and then I deleted all what I wrote. I had some good ideas but was overwhelmed and disorganised. I felt tired and thus left for home hoping tomorrow I may have clearer mind. On my way home, I met a friend, Dr. Amjad Abu-El-Ezz, who invited me to a party convened for the sake of charity. I politely declined for not being in the mood. He insisted. I went deciding that I would stay for 20 minutes and leave. A few minutes after I arrived there, I found Ray Hinnebusch right in front of me. Overwhelmed and in disbelief, I marched towards him and introduced myself and said that I have been writing a research proposal for him the whole day. He smiled and told me now you do not need to send it, you can say it here and now. For more than 4 hours, I did not stop talking. I did not just state the research proposal. I said everything I wanted, everything I read for him and everything in

general about everything in life!

Since then, I considered us to have become good friends. Not only a professor and his student, but also a young researcher and his guru. Ray has always been a great asset in my life. His deep insights, with his simple and attractive writing style, have always fascinated me and still do. His support, patience, understanding, faith, and the conversations we had together, have always benefited me in ways he himself would not realise.

For Raymond Hinnebusch, I dedicate this work, and every future work I will ever do. Thank you Ray.

Scene number 3

Once upon a time, I was a small child. I grew up to find myself surrounded with books. Books everywhere: On the shelves over my bed; in the living room and on every single table in our house. I realized that my father, Fahmy Shahin, is called by everyone around us: an intellectual. He was politicized during his early ages in the heat of the Nasserite era in the 1950s and 1960s. He loved reading and deeply respected the value of knowledge and academic research. Indeed, because of him I started reading, actually playing, with the books around me since I was 7 years old. He encouraged my insatiable scientific and intellectual curiosity and our discussions never stopped until his passing away on the 6th of June 2016. He wished so much to see this day and read these words. But death was faster.

To my father: I miss you. And I suffer today because you are not here.

Scene number 4

Her eyes were, and still are, full of unrivaled determination. Her strong ambitions for me and my brothers never ceased to push me forward. Her soul is a soul of a warrior not just a mother: my mother, Afaf Younis. Because of this woman, I was not only bestowed life. I was rather bestowed an iron will that is only part of hers. Because of this lady, I was taught what it means to be kind yet a fighter, innocent yet wild, cooperative yet competent and open to life yet protective of my loved ones. Afaf Younis is by far the greatest and most impressive story of survival, stamina and success I have read or known about.

To my mother: Everything I have achieved, or will ever achieve, is because of you. You are the nuclear motor that pumps power in my veins. I love you.

Scene number 5

During the journey, I received unlimited support and encouragement from many people. I will never forget how generous and supportive Ambassador Sherif Naguib was. Working under his leadership was a turning point in my life. His warm presence and fatherly guidance did guide me in the

beginning of my journey. Thank you your Excellency.

The Intellectual and professional support I received from Ambassador Hossam Zaki cannot be described in words. Ambassador Zaki was always, since I joined the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a source of admiration for me. He is the perfect exemplar of the Statesman and as I got to know him, I learned that he was also a fine intellectual with very deep and wise insights about politics, arts and life in general. Thank you your Excellency.

I also had the privilege of working, and getting unlimited support, from Ambassador Alaa Youssef, one of the most successful diplomats in Egypt. In spite of his professional burdens, extremely tight and hectic schedule, he was always keen to offer what could make the last crucial year of my PhD less painful and more productive. Thank you Your Excellency. In addition, the support, good will, and encouragement my colleagues, Ibrahim Salem and Ahmed Salama, offered, were vital in making my life easier during the last year. Thank you dear friends.

Four of my lifelong friends were burdened during all these years with my endless discussions and unanswered questions. They added to my knowledge and understanding in a way that I cannot thank them for enough. Gamal Roshdy Abul-Hasan, the brilliant intellectual, columnist and diplomat, and, more importantly, my mind-mate with whom I have had ongoing discussions about everything for the last 13 years. Gamal, you are one of a kind. My only wish for you is that Egypt and humanity would be lucky enough to get more of your insights and writings.

Also, my dearest friend, and the most intellectual person I ever known, Sameh Samir, without you in my life during the last 8 years, I am not sure if I would have been able to continue. I wish you never stop to impress me with how much you know, and how amazing your unique brain works!

Special thanks go to my dear friend, and comrade of academic struggle, Dr. Khaled Shaalan. Khaled has been through the same journey in London. His tenacity, sharp intellect and sense of humor were the best companion in London. Thank you Khaled. Another special thanks is for my dear friend, Jinan Al-Habbal, my colleague in St Andrews. Jinan, your funny spirit and lovely Lebanese accent will never be forgotten. I wish you all the best.

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Last scene

Noran Aly is not only my fiancé and wife-to-be; she is the most important reason behind getting this thesis done. She is the most dedicated, loyal, and persistent human being on planet Earth. Her

determination and support pushed me forward during some of the toughest times of writing this thesis. Noran was there when nobody else was; she believed when faith was short; she had patience when patience was a scarce resource. Noran, my ultimate best friend, is the most beautiful reward I could ever get from this life. I wish her optimism and warm smile continue to lighten up the rest of my life.

To Noran: without you, these words would have never been written or published, thank you.

1. Candidate's declarations:

I, Ahmed Fahmy Shahin, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 66389 words in length, has been written by me, and that it is the record of work carried out by me, or principally by myself in collaboration with others as acknowledged, and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September, 2011 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in June, 2012; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2011 and 2017.

Date 31 March 2017 signature of candidate *Ahmed Shahin*

2. Supervisor's declaration:

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

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Note on Transliteration

Generally, Arabic transliteration throughout the thesis is based on a simple version of the International Journal of Middle East Studies' Transliteration guide. However, Exceptions have been made for the names of historical figures, and some well-known locations. These have been provided according to widely accepted English Spellings. In addition, Arabic Names of interviewees and authors appear according to their own Chosen English spellings, or as in their public profiles, respectively.

Chapter One

Introduction, Analytical Framework, and Methodology

“The strongest is never strong enough always to be master, unless he transforms strength into right, and obedience into duty”

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the Social Contract

1.1 Introduction

Indeed, the events of the 2011 Arab Uprisings and its ensuing consequences took the world by surprise as much as it shocked the Arab countries which experienced them. For many, it was the “spring of hope”. However, for a minority it was the “winter of despair” (Dickens 2004) . In either case, the Arab Uprisings took the debate on Middle East politics to a whole new level. After years of the dominance of the dichotomy of democratisation/authoritarianism approaches in literature, it appeared that there could be a third, less predicted outcome: State collapse and civil wars. While this was the case in Libya, Syria and Yemen, two other countries: Tunisia and Egypt, faced a different destiny. Tunisia, the igniter of the Arab Uprisings’ revolutionary wave, appeared to progress well on the track of democratisation, albeit with the steady rise of political Islam and its challenge to the long-present secularism in the country. Egypt, on the other hand, could be described as a unique case in the region with regard to the Arab Uprising. After a brief period of chaos, and a briefer period of the political Islam’s rule, the traditional state, led by the military and the security apparatuses, regained its control over the society and appeared to be successfully reconsolidating its leadership. Egypt appears to be the only country in the Arab Uprisings states that tread on a different path. It survived the revolutionary wave without neither collapse nor sustainably democratise. Hence was the idea of this research. How could one explain the Egyptian case?

The temptation of studying the whole Arab Uprisings states in a comparative approach was indeed present. However, from the very beginning the researcher decided, for two reasons, to focus solely on Egypt. First, such a massive scope would invariably compromise the depth of the analysis. Second, as the researcher was an eyewitness on the latest developments in Egypt and a passionate observer of most of the developments of his country’s contemporary politics, it was more feasible, and still interesting enough, to focus this research on Egypt.

Indeed, Egypt has long been acclaimed as a sole subject of study in the field of Middle East politics. Many reasons justify that. First, although the future of the Arab Middle East cannot be determined by any single country, “the success or failure of Egypt”, Bowker (2010:76) argues, “speaks volumes about the evolving nature of Arab societies”. Rutherford argued that Egypt is the key to promoting democracy in the Middle East as it has the Arab World’s largest population, largest military, second largest economy and most powerful cultural influence (Rutherford 2008). Secondly, the Egyptian case has been used by several authors as a single-case study when researching authoritarianism and the prospects of democratisation in the Middle East. Rutherford (2008), for example, stated that the Egyptian case “provides an opportunity to analyse the competition among ideas and institutions that shapes the entire region”. The reason for that was, in Rutherford, view, that all major ideological orientations; i.e. liberal, Islamist, democratic, statist, are well represented in Egypt. Waterbury (1992, p.3) summarised it in authoritative words:

Egypt’s geopolitical significance, its overall weight in the important Arab world, and the fact that it was one among a handful of Third World states to move in the 1950s toward a socialist transformation, would in themselves constitute adequate justification for a one-country case study.

Indeed, the eruption of the January Uprising in 2011 and the ensuing collapse of the Mubarak regime in just 18 days was, in particular, surprising to Egypt experts in Western academia. Egypt was a major case study in most of the literature. It could be noticed that there was nearly a consensus among observers before 2011 that the Egyptian political system was quite stable (Kassem 2004; Carothers 2002; Lust-Okar 2005; Brownlee 2007; King 2009). Brownlee (2007) argued that the ex-ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) efficiently co-opted elites to ensure their alignment with the regime’s side rather than with opposition, thus providing for long-term systemic stability. In the same context, Lust-Okar (2005) contended that political stability in Egypt depended on effective divide-and-rule strategy. Like many façade-democratic regimes, the Mubarak regime allowed for the presence of some legal parties to operate and organise in the political system, but the most powerful and popular organisation, the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), was allowed to participate only indirectly, and was never recognised as a political party under Mubarak. In sum, by allowing certain parties to access specific levels of power and privileges, under the control of the regime, it was possible to drive a wedge between the opposition camps (Lust-Okar, 2005). El-Ghobashy (2008) and Rutherford (2008) found some possibilities for change in the increasing density of civil society and judicial oversight, however neither saw democratisation as particularly likely. Rutherford

(2008), for instance, suggested that Egypt might be heading towards more liberalisation, but not democratisation.

Indeed, the process of political reform in Egypt was severely under the full control of the regime. The regime was keen to offer a façade democracy, hoping that the employment of parliamentary election and pluralism, would help boosting its legitimacy. However, the elections were widely believed to be manipulated by the security apparatuses so that its results represent the regime's will, not the public will (Ehteshami 1999, p.210). Furthermore, political parties were allowed to exist only after having the approval of the 'committee of parties', which is headed by the secretary general of the ruling party. Thus, it could be noted that the façade democracy that the regime attempted to bolster to enhance its legitimacy, was in reality a strategy of regime survival (Pool 1993, p.53). For Ayubi, the regime found that a certain measure of political pluralisation would serve its survival purposes, as it is more reassuring to foreign investors and aid-giving Western governments. He called that strategy: "for the Yankees to see" (Ayubi 1996, p.403).

After the rise of the political role's of Gamal Mubarak (the younger son of Mubarak), in the 2000s, it was argued in the literature that Gamal might not face serious challenges in his rise to power in Egypt. Hanna (2009) for example, claimed that the architecture of the political and electoral control created by the regime in Egypt made any challenge to Gamal's ascendancy to power, and any long-term change, difficult. Cook (2009) also argued that the underlying structures and processes of Egyptian politics would prevent further liberalisation.

Evaluations of the Mubarak regime, according to Cook (2009), "enjoyed as close to a consensus in political science circles as there is in the discipline – façade democracy works for the Mubarak regime, the coercive apparatus is strong, resilient, and co-opted, and there are no clear-and-present dangers to its authority on the horizon". Although King (2009, p.97) noted that Egypt has been witnessing the longest wave of workers strikes and protests since World War II, he maintained that there seemed to be a wide agreement that the mobilisation capacity of the various opposition groups was very low, and thus a change of regime or democratisation was highly unlikely. Indeed, the experts on the Middle East seemed to have missed the 'Arab Spring' (Gause 2011; Heydemann & Leenders 2013, pp.2–3). It was thus natural that the Arab uprising led to a degree of "soul-searching among regional experts" (Jung 2008).

Even worse, in the wake of the Uprising, the dilemma of Egyptian politics hit new levels. With the success of the Uprising, scholarly and informed opinion swung radically in the opposite direction, expecting the rapid spread of democracy in the Arab world. But after a brief moment of enthusiasm with a democratic future in Egypt after the fall of Mubarak, the Egyptian postcolonial

state proved once again to be more solid than what many scholars in the Western academia had thought in the immediate aftermath of Mubarak's departure. The Egyptian state, although it sacrificed the Mubarak regime, was not only able to survive the January popular uprising, but has also survived the rule of its historical adversary, the MB, and was able to regain power after a year of the MB's senior member Mohamed Morsi's rule as Egypt's first democratically elected President. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi became Egypt's new President among euphoric propaganda that imagined the future of Egypt under Sisi would be similar to the glorious days of Nasser (Chulov 2013; Emam 2015).

Indeed, this is not to say that nothing has changed in the Egyptian politics since January 2011, or that Sisi's regime is a mere extension of the ancien régime. It is rather meant to suggest, in light of the unprecedented political events of 2011 in the Middle East in general and in Egypt in particular, that political change might have other logics than those assumed by the literature on the Middle East's politics which has been centrally revolving around studying democratisation and authoritarianism. By only focusing on the dichotomy of democratisation/authoritarianism and overlooking social, politico-economic and ideological contents of the political struggle processes, we risk repeatedly missing the essence of the process of political change in the Arab World and Egypt. It is indeed time not only to reassess our understanding of the Arab regimes' stability, but also to change our research questions on the Middle East's politics. Instead of exclusively asking questions on why these regimes lack democracy or how they resist 'democratic pressures', it might be the time to study these regimes and societies as they are in reality, not on the basis of what they ought to be. In this context, the task of this thesis is to analyse the underlying dynamics of regime change/stability in Egypt, especially with regards to the January Uprising and its consequences as it is, arguably, the most major and shocking event in Egypt's contemporary history. Specific research questions will be accurately identified in a later section, after reviewing the different theoretical approaches to study the Middle East and Egyptian politics.

1.2 Theoretical Review

In order to be able to develop the simple question mentioned above about the dynamics of regime change/stability in Egypt into a well-defined research problem and accurate research questions, a critical visit to the literature on Egypt and the Arab Uprising is necessary.

1.2.1 The Debate on Democracy and authoritarianism

Indeed, since the mid-1970s, and particularly after the end of the Cold War, a trend towards democracy appeared to be sweeping the non-Western world (Carothers 2002, p.5). Samuel Huntington called it, and it has been known as, the third wave of democracy (ibid.). Khaled Shaalan (2014, p.13) depicted the ideas of Samuel Huntington, the main theorist of the third wave of democratisation, as follows:

“In his prediction of an upcoming ‘third wave’ of democratisation, Samuel Huntington anticipated that the growing influence of international financial organisations in providing assistance to economically liberalising third-world countries in the 1990s would yield considerable leverage to encourage democratisation in various parts of the world. Regarding The Arab world, Huntington’s optimism went so far that he proposed that, in such a context, ‘a new Jeffersonian-style Nasser could spread a democratic version of Pan-Arabism in the Middle East’. In addition, he suggested that the American deployment of around half a million soldiers during the Gulf War in 1990-1991 could, if sustained long enough, provide an external impetus for liberalisation if not immediate democratisation in the Gulf monarchies.”

The democratisation/transition approach could be said to have guided the study of the Middle East in particular (Brumberg 2014). It is thus important to shed the light on its premises. It starts with authoritarian regimes introducing democratic institutions; i.e. elections, free press, etc., to bolster their legitimacy that is eroding due to the application of liberal economic policies which has negative consequences of the poor masses. In doing so, the ruling elites only aim at cosmetic reforms that appease the democratic pressures from below while keeping real power in the hands of the ruling elites. However, these political and economic openings act as a “slippery slope” in which political dynamics spin out of the control of the ruling regimes, and lead to democratisation (King 2009, pp.24–25). It has thus been expected according to the transition paradigm that economic and political liberalisation will eventually lead to democratisation, after a period of transition between authoritarianism and democracy.

Carothers identified five basic assumptions to theoretically informing the democratisation approach (Carothers (2002, pp.6–7). First, the approach suggests that “any country moving away from dictatorial rule can be considered a country in transition toward democracy” (Ibid, p.6). This assumption indeed was supported by the ‘wave’ of democratisation that spread in the world

especially in Latin America and Eastern Europe. Second, the democratisation paradigm contends that the process of democratisation follows a general specific pattern: the process starts with democratic pressures that cause a crack in the authoritarian ruling elite. There follows a breakthrough in which the ruling regime collapses and a new democratic regime is installed. Finally, the new democratic experience starts to be consolidated with time through national elections and institutional reform. Third, the theory believes in the crucial importance of free, democratic elections in consolidating the new democracy. The fourth hypothesis the democratisation tradition makes is that structural factors are not determinant of the democratisation process; whether its initiation or outcomes. Structural factors include economic conditions, political and institutional legacies, ethnic make-up, sociocultural traditions, etc. “All that seemed to be necessary for democratization”, Carothers clarifies, “was a decision by a country’s political elites to move toward democracy and an ability on the part of those elites to fend off the contrary actions of remaining antidemocratic forces” (Carothers 2002, p.8). Fifth, the democratisation trend assumes that the democratic transition process would be based upon coherent and functioning states.

However, struck with the stubbornness of Arab authoritarianism, even its upgrading in the 1990s and 2000s, the transition paradigm took many steps back, at least when it comes to the Middle East. For over a decade before the Arab Uprising, the paradigm of authoritarian resilience dominated the scholarship on the Arab politics. The authoritarian durability approach argued that the region’s reality suggests that it is by examining how authoritarian regimes survived and the mechanisms that permitted their persistence that we can reach a better understanding of the region, and that “we had entered a phase of post-democratization” in scholarly analysis of the region (Valbjørn & Bank 2010; Pace & Cavatorta 2012, p.127; Hinnebusch 2010, p.201). The authoritarian durability approach focuses on “identifying those structural or institutional factors which are associated with regime survival, as well as authoritarian preconditions and the lack of democratic “requisites” (Ambrosio 2014, p.473). It attributed the continuity of authoritarian rule in the region, Egypt included, to the absence of various cultural and socioeconomic factors that are necessary for democratisation to take place (Ahmed & Capoccia 2014, p.5). Two strains of thought could be distinguished in this regard. The *first* one revolved around the idea of ‘Arab Exceptionalism’. For the exceptionalism scholars, the region was doomed not to democratise. That conclusion was based on cultural determinants: basically religion. Huntington made the influential and controversial claim of incompatibility of Islam and democracy (Huntington 1998). Scholars followed with analysing the relationship between Islam and democracy. Aside from being culturally essentialist, the cultural exceptionalism approach was rightly criticised for speaking of Islam and democracy in such broad terms. Bayat (2007), for

example, made the argument that Islam and democracy could be found to be compatible or incompatible according to context and the specific features examined (Ahmed & Capoccia 2014, p.5).

Other scholars, including Hisham Sharabi (1992) and Charles Tripp (1995), suggested that the endurance of traditional social structure is the reason of the region's persistent authoritarianism. For instance, national parties and civil society organisations are regarded as necessary venues for democratisation, but the development of these has been hindered by the existence of traditional patrimonial and tribal structures. Furthermore, in several Middle East countries a minority sectarian, regime-allied group dominates over the larger population, and these elite-mass divides can be further deepened by the dimension of class with very wealthy elites on one side and very poor populations on the other, as is the case in rentier states. It has also been suggested that the dynamics of the rentier states are not favourable for the emergence of democracy. The availability of resources such as oil, or other forms of rent, such as foreign aid, exempt the state from having to impose heavy taxes on the population, whereas such taxation has historically acted as a major impetus for social mobilisation (Ahmed & Capoccia 2014).

Unsatisfied with the concept of regional exceptionalism associated with the “transition” approach and its emphasis on cultural, social and economic pre-requisites, a new wave of scholarship on Middle East countries worked on challenging the idea that liberalisation would necessarily lead to democratisation. In fact, many started to approach the ongoing adoption of liberal institutions as an attempt by the authoritarian regimes to respond to social and economic pressures through a clever change of their modalities of control (Ahmed & Capoccia 2014). Although some scholars maintained that the openings created by the ruling elites might, with time, slip out of their control, many others argued that this “authoritarian upgrading”, as Heydemann (1999) called it, is what enabled Arab regimes, including Egypt, to survive.

1.2.2 Beyond the dichotomy of democratisation vs. authoritarianism

It could be argued that the former approaches failed to grasp the logic of change in the Arab Middle East. Simply put, the democratisation approach could claim limited credibility in the case of Tunis, but not Egypt, Syria, Libya, or Yemen. On the other hand, the authoritarian stability approach could not do the same for any of the cases. This is not to claim that they were irrelevant. On the contrary, the debate on democratisation has offered many insightful and useful analysis and valuable works. It leaves us with a resourceful legacy to draw upon. However, in order to do that with an open eye,

a critique of the democratisation/non-democratisation approaches should be offered.

The *democratisation paradigm* was heavily criticized (Carothers 2002; Miller & Martini 2012). Gause labelled it as a “wishful thinking” approach (Gause 2011, p.13). Main points of criticism could be summarised as follows. *First*, the transition approach is constituted “mostly of post hoc explanations tied to specific times and contexts. For example, the Latin American and Southern European transitions of the 1970s gave rise to a highly actor-oriented model with elite division and elite pacts being seen as able to overcome what had traditionally been considered key impediments to democratisation, such as socio-economic or societal factors” (Ambrosio 2014, p.475). “For instance, some of the most important work written on the topic of transitions has been produced during peak years of democratization – the famous “third wave” (Huntington 1991) – (a period between the 1960s and 1990s). O’Donnell, Schmitter, Linz, Stepan, Levitsky, Przeworski, and others have all created their respective work throughout a period of worldwide democratic movements” (Miloš 2015, p.17). *Second*, by overlooking the structural impediments to democratisation, the transition tradition’s high hopes of the democratic opening in Egypt for example, after the January Uprising, were not satisfied. The political outcomes in Egypt suggested that the shift from authoritarianism does not deterministically lead to democratisation. It could instead be seriously hindered by structural factors and lead to different forms of authoritarianism or even, politico-religious forms of governance. Democratisation, indeed, would take more than good intentions and political will of the elites and democrats. *Thirdly*, both the approaches could be accused of being normative and value-laden.

On the other hand, the *authoritarian persistence approach* overestimated the robustness of the authoritarian regimes in the region. As mentioned earlier, the authoritarian upgrading concept has drawn attention to the way ruling elites resorted to nominally liberalising reforms as a mechanism of reconfiguring, while keeping, authoritarian power. The fall of Mubarak, Ben Ali, Saleh and Gadhafi took this paradigm off guard, one may say. Pace and Cavatorta (2012) underline the “unintended consequences” as the aspect missing from the notion of “upgraded authoritarianism”. They argue that while these scholars did not necessarily assume the immortality of authoritarian rule or existing political systems, little attention was given to the concrete impact of the top-down political and economic reforms on society as well as the way societal forces reacted to such reforms.

1.2.3 Different Explanatory Approaches: hybrid regimes and populist and post-populist authoritarianism

With the polarisation of black and white, the need for grey grew. Other scholars attempted to take the debate beyond that one-dimensional dichotomy of democracy vs. authoritarianism and open the space for more comprehensive reading of the reality. In that context, the hybrid regimes approach came with an attempt to reconcile the former two approaches. It argued that the Arab Middle East regimes included processes and institutions that reflect both democratic and authoritarian aspects. The net political result of this mix is neither authoritarianism nor democracy; it is what could be called hybrid regimes. Diamond (2002) notes, “roughly one-third of the world’s regimes could be described as hybrids”. The emergence and spread of hybrid regimes in the world during the last few decades has been attributed to the deep changes in the international setting after the fall of the Soviet Union and the third wave of democracy (Rutherford 2008). Hybrid regimes may contain legislatures, independent judiciaries, and civil society; however, they do not allow the transfer of power through elections. In Rutherford’s view, hybrid regimes were not transiting to full democracy (Rutherford 2008). It is not possible nevertheless for them, Rutherford adds, to reverse to full authoritarianism. In order to understand the prospects of democracy in the Arab world it should be understood how hybrid regimes emerged, why they remained stable for years and why and how they change over time (Rutherford 2008). However, although the Hybrid Regimes approach avoided the normative issue of labelling political regimes as democratising or authoritarian, by arguing that they were mixed regimes with a potential to be heading towards one of the two directions, it still lacked political and social content. It could be described as a category more than a conceptual approach or theory.

In the same context, in a long project aiming to consolidate an approach that avoids the limitations of the previously mentioned conceptual frameworks, Raymond Hinnebusch worked on bringing “old tools” back in (Hinnebusch 2010, p.201). Hinnebusch built on two theoretical traditions: Historical Sociology and New Institutionalism (Hinnebusch 2006, pp.378–386). Historical Sociology argued that social structures, notably the state-class relation, shapes to a great extent the political paths that states take (Hinnebusch 2006, p.378). New Institutionalism extends the argument to note that authoritarian regimes are not alike and they differ in degree depending on their level of institutionalism, “which is shaped by and shapes the social forces that they include and exclude” (Hinnebusch 2006, p.380). Based on that, Hinnebusch distinguished between different institutional formations of political regimes. There are, first, fairly primitive forms which tend to be

viable at lower levels of development. These lack the kind of institutions needed to integrate supportive social forces as well as to implement policy. Personal dictatorships and military juntas would represent this formation/category. Secondly, authoritarian regimes that are durable at considerably higher levels of development. These are more ‘institutionalized’, single party/corporatist systems, which enjoy relatively more modern, potentially more inclusive bureaucratic/technocratic institutions. Here Hinnebusch stresses the importance “to distinguish ‘PA’ (populist authoritarian) regimes from ‘BA’ (‘bureaucratic authoritarian’) regimes”. He points to populist authoritarianism as the dominant institutional type from which most current Middle East regimes sprang.

Indeed, PA regimes were not exclusive to the ME. Hinnebusch (1988, p.2) noted that populist-authoritarianism was a phenomenon in the post-colonial world. Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Guinea, and Tanzania, he stated, were examples of countries that adopted that mode of rule after independence. In the Middle East, it was first introduced by Turkey under Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. In the post-independence Arab world, it has been the dominating system of governance in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Libya and Algeria. Populist authoritarianism is a “post-decolonization state-building strategy adopted by nationalist elites which face simultaneous external threat and internal instability” (Hinnebusch 2001, p.2). PA in the Middle East states, according to Hinnebusch (2001, pp.1–12), was a function of two main factors: nationalist struggle against imperialism and the rise of a new middle class as a result of capitalist and bureaucratic growth under occupation. Hinnebusch (1988, p.2) suggested the characteristics of populist-authoritarianism as follows:

“It appears to be a function of a specific stage of state formation and societal modernization. It is typically the product of nationalist reaction against imperialism, that is, of struggles for independence or against extroverted, dependent development; it is also chiefly a phenomenon of the early middle stages of development, the product of a challenge by a rising salaried middle class to traditional upper class dominance, prior to a large-scale mobilization of the masses.”

In Hinnebusch’s analysis of PA regimes, three important sets of features matter in particular (Hinnebusch 2006, pp.380–382). *First, political economy* features that are concerned with the social base of the regime. The PA regimes issued from revolutionary coups that aimed at expressing the needs and grievances of the new middle class (allied with workers and peasants) against the oligarchic class that was in association with the foreign occupation; i.e. the British occupation in the

case of Egypt. *Second, ideological* features that notes that PA regimes were a reaction to Western imperialism. Nationalism thus was the natural strategy to follow by PA rulers for two reasons. The first one is that they themselves had the desire to challenge the Western dominance from which many of them suffered, even personally. The second reason is that nationalism was not only an ideology they believed in but also a glue to cement the socioeconomic alliance (middle class/peasant/workers) against their foe (the capitalist bourgeoisie) with its ideological orientation towards the West and its liberal democratic ideologies. This factor would have massive influence on creating a democratic-unfriendly environment, as it will be often available for rulers to build on this legacy and easily link democratic demands with foreign penetration and dominance and even espionage. *Third, institutional* features that highlights the importance of institutions (namely military and bureaucratic) in consolidating the PA regimes. Simply these two organisations, Hinnebusch notes, were the largest in society. The party, even in the case of less-ideological National Democratic Party of Egypt, penetrated the society by ‘networks of privilege’, familial and tribal connections and patronage resources.

In his seminal work *Egyptian Politics under Sadat*, Hinnebusch first introduced the PPA (post-populist authoritarianism) model. He argued that the Arab republican states entered in the 1970s an era of post-populism after the exhaustion of the populist model (Hinnebusch 1988). Post-populism was thus the strategy employed by authoritarian regimes pursuing economic and political reform after the former version of the regime; i.e. the populist phase, was exhausted. PPA regimes were therefore forced to liberalise their economies and allow for controlled political liberalisation. In spite of the anticipated democratic consequences of economic liberalisation, PPA regimes successfully resisted the pressures to open up. The reasons of their durability, according to Hinnebusch, lied basically in the alliance of the regimes with crony capitalism forming a narrow, non-democratic ruling coalition that excludes the masses from power and wealth. However, post-populism could not be viewed as a maturation of PA. According to the continuum of inclusion and competitiveness (Hinnebusch 2010), it could be suggested that PPA regimes signified a “simultaneous expansion of competitiveness and shrinkage of inclusion”. Hinnebusch (2006, p.233), in line with Rutherford (2008), expected that political liberalisation could be congruent, as a survival strategy, with PPA regimes; however, democratisation is not. Hinnebusch (2006) nonetheless did not exclude a ‘from below’ pathway to democratisation in the PPA regimes. In his words, “[a]ssuming that the liabilities of incumbent regimes remain unresolved, regime collapse might provide the conditions for a negotiated democratisation pact cutting across the state-society divide” (Hinnebusch 2006). Hinnebusch’s theory was further developed to include the first twenty

years of Egypt under Mubarak (Hinnebusch 2000:123-145). Post-populist authoritarianism suggested that the objective conditions—the balance between the state and social forces—allow only a form of limited, lopsided political liberalisation, but not democratisation. Hinnebusch also did not exclude the possibility of a “praetorian breakdown” (Hinnebusch 2000), in line with Huntington (1968).

It could be argued that Hinnebusch’s most obvious characteristic, and advantage, is that he employs multi-theoretical notions creating a multi-levelled coherent narrative. He thus merges political economist structural Marxist-inspired ideas (social structures, political economy, class relations, etc.) with Weberian concepts (the identity/sovereignty incongruence, elites, institutions and bureaucracy, etc.). It is correctly argued that no one single approach is capable of grasping the uniqueness of the Middle East features and thus a combination of concepts is needed (Hinnebusch 2003, p.1). Hinnebusch’s works on the Middle East politics cast the light on his theoretical foundations for the PA/PPA approach: a) In his study on the Egyptian politics under Sadat, Hinnebusch employed a multiple framework based on three levels. *First*, a Marxist approach that assumes that the motor of change is the structural pressures from the environment, namely the global political economy and class structure. *Second*, an institutionalist approach that focuses on how the political regime cope with these structural pressures and how power is distributed between competing political forces. *Third*, a Weberian elitist approach that focuses on the elites’ origins, ideologies, and legitimisation’s strategies. b) Similarly, in his two articles on democratisation in the Middle East, he appeared to link his PA/PPA model to two theoretical orientations: historical sociology and new institutionalism. Here Hinnebusch again starting from the deeper socioeconomic and political structures as the ultimate stimuli of system change and then trace the structural factors’ trickling down through institutions and elites. The historical sociology and new institutionalism approaches allow deploying different conceptions without strictly abiding by one tradition of thought.

However, the PA/PPA model does not dig deeper in the society level, and it implicitly assumes that legitimacy is a unified ‘black box’ that is either existent or non-existent. That is why without the study of legitimacy as a subject on its own, it becomes difficult to provide persuasive answers for the following questions: How does the society exactly get affected by the structural factors? How does it perceive legitimacy of the ruling elites? What are the most crucial components of legitimacy? Which class in the society is the one that matters most when it comes to legitimacy? How do ruling elites attempt to legitimize themselves (and their institutions including the state) and what are the counter- elites’ de-legitimation strategies? Why do people, or different parts of them,

respond to specific leaders and ideas and reject others?

In my view, it is only in the fluctuating equations of legitimacy that any logic of regime change could be found. This thesis hence makes the argument that it is by thoroughly studying legitimacy, based on the premises of the PA/PPA model, a better explanation of the ‘Egyptian case’ could be attained. Thus, by adding a new layer to the post-populist approach; that is a sophisticated model of *legitimacy*, it would be possible to explain what political conditions and behaviours lead to rise/fall/change of legitimacy.

It could be noticed that the literature on the Middle East, and Egypt’s politics has neglected studying legitimacy as an independent subject of study and rather used it in its common sense’s meaning. In this context, it is noteworthy that during the last four decades only three volumes were systematically devoted to studying legitimacy in the Middle East: Michael Hudson’s *Arab Politics: Search for Legitimacy*; Dekmejian’s *Egypt Under Nasir: A Study in Political Dynamics* and Hisham Al-Awadi’s *In Pursuit of Legitimacy: The MB and Mubarak, 1982-2000* (Dekmejian 1971; Hudson 1979; Al-Awadi 2004). One reason for the under-research of legitimacy in Egypt and the Middle East could be that it was often supposed that the Arab authoritarian regimes lacked legitimacy and they were ruling only by coercion (Niblock 2006, p.10). However, this argument fails to convince. No political regime could sustain political stability for decades without a certain level of legitimacy and consent of the ruled (Al-Awadi 2004). Egyptian political thinker Sa'd Eddin Ibrahim stressed legitimacy as being a significant element to the Egyptian regime under Mubarak (Al-Awadi 2004). Ibrahim stated that legitimacy has always been an essential concern for any ruling regime in Egypt. Any regime must claim some form of legitimacy. Whether rulers truly believe their own claim to legitimacy is something else. But when one looks at their speeches and their policies, all this shows how attentive they are to legitimacy (Al-Awadi 2004). As another scholar puts it, “even the most tyrannic rulers try to justify their reign”(Dogan 1992, p.116). Before introducing the proposed theoretical framework, it is now in order to outline the research questions.

1.3 Research Questions:

The research questions of this work will read as follows: How could legitimacy of political regimes in Egypt be understood? What causes legitimacy levels to rise, fall or change? Through what ways was the impact of the Nasserite social pact’s dissolution mitigated for 4 decades? In other words, how did Mubarak particularly continue to rule Egypt peacefully (compared to what happened afterwards) in spite of the decay of Nasser’s welfare state? What has changed in the equation and

caused the January Uprising to take place and the Mubarak regime not to survive it?

The thesis will also address the post-Mubarak Egypt, highlighting three main questions: Why could the Uprising not produce the democratic system that it demanded? Why could the army not directly rule Egypt after 2011 and had to organise free elections in 2012 and even accept its outcomes and hand over power to its historical enemy; i.e. the MB? Why did the MB rise and quickly fall from power in Egypt? And, how the army under Sisi was able to hold its grip on power after the overthrow of the MB's leadership from the Presidency?

1.4 Conceptual Approach: Legitimacy

1.4.1 What is legitimacy?

The study of legitimacy is par excellence a Weberian theme. The word 'legitimacy' is derived from the Latin word 'legitimas'. The meaning of legitimacy, during the middle ages, was interpreted as 'lawful'. Cicero, the Roman politician and philosopher, used the word 'legitimum' to indicate the power constituted by law. However, later on the word 'legitimacy' was used to denote traditional procedures, constitutional principles and adoption to traditions. At still later a stage the element of 'consent' was added to its meaning. Consent was considered the core of legitimate rule. However, in the modern age it was Max Weber, the Godfather of legitimacy studies, to first articulate the concept of legitimacy as a universal concept (YourArticleLibrary 2016). According to Weber, a political regime is legitimate when its participants have certain beliefs or faith ("Legitimitätsglaube") in regard to it: "the basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige" (Weber 1947, p.382). Other definitions of legitimacy revolved around the Weberian tradition. For example, Alagappa defines legitimacy, simply, as the "right to rule" (Alagappa 1995, p.2). Merkl emphasized the cultural aspect of legitimacy stating that it represents "a nation unified by a consensus on political values" (Merkl 1998, p.21). For Lipset, it is "the capacity of the system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society" (Lipset 1963, p.77).

However, four specific features of the nature of legitimacy deserve special attention. *First*, legitimacy should be understood as a belief on the part of the ruled that the ruler deserves, morally, to be obeyed. Weber, and Easton too, who is another classical writer on legitimacy, made the crucial distinction between consent that is derived from the people's belief that the regime is legitimate,

and consent that is derived from the people being materially rewarded for obeying the regime. Weber wrote:

“The legitimacy of an order may be guaranteed or upheld in two principal ways: (1) from purely disinterested motives, which may in turn be (a) purely affectual, consisting in an emotionally determined loyalty; or (b) may derive from a rational belief in the absolute validity of the order as an expression of ultimate values, whether they be moral, aesthetic or of any other type; or (c) may originate in religious attitudes, through the belief in the dependence of some condition of religious salvation on conformity with the order; (2) also or entirely by self-interest, that is, through expectations of specific ulterior consequences, but consequences which are, to be sure, of a particular kind” (Weber 1947, p.126).

And then he added:

“Purely material interests and calculations of advantage as the basis of solidarity between the chief and his administrative staff result, in this as in other connexions, in a relatively unstable situation” (Weber 1947, p.325).

In the same context, (Easton 1965, p.278) asserted the same idea on legitimacy:

“the most stable support will derive from the conviction of the ruled individual that it is right and proper for him to obey the authorities. That might be because he sees the requirements of the regime as conforming to his moral principles, the strength of this support derives from the fact that it is not conditional on specific inducements or rewards of any kind, except in the very long run.”

In more general terms, it could thus be noted, as Dahl argued, that there are three bases of power out of which legitimacy is the most stable. The *first* base of power is legitimacy—people believe that they OUGHT to obey. *Secondly*, if there is a deficiency in legitimacy, the regime would resort to the bargain model—people obey as long as they receive material benefits; and *finally*, if both models failed to ensure obedience of the ruled and political stability, comes the role of coercion and its threat.

Second, the legitimacy of a specific political regime depends on the people’s perception of other alternative conceptions of legitimacy. Linz adds this important dimension to legitimacy. In a more nuanced and accurate definition, he maintains that legitimacy is “the belief that, in spite of shortcomings and failures, the political institutions are better than any other that might be

established, and therefore can demand obedience” (Linz 1998). Thus, instead of focusing solely on the legitimacy of a specific object, Linz’s definition assumes that it is not possible to analyse the legitimacy of a particular regime without comparing it with the potential alternatives that could substitute it and how people perceive each. The ruled, especially in today’s connected world, make continuous comparisons between other political arrangements that could be better than the one they already have. The result of these comparisons, which take place in the public sphere, decides the level of the regime’s legitimacy and people’s readiness to change the regime.

Third, it would be difficult to discuss legitimacy as a unified concept (Al-Awadi 2004, Hudson 1979). Weatherford (1991) stated that “political legitimacy is too unwieldy and complex a concept to be grappled in a frontal assault, and virtually all the empirical literature follows the tactic of breaking it into component parts.” Thus, legitimacy was argued to comprise several types and elements.

Fourth, legitimacy is not static. It changes according to the kind of legitimacy that the regime claims. Each type of legitimacy would have fundamentally different outcomes. As Weber illustratively puts it:

“... every such system attempts to establish and to cultivate the belief in its 'legitimacy.' But according to the kind of legitimacy which is claimed, the type of obedience, the kind of administrative staff developed to guarantee it, and the mode of exercising authority, will all differ fundamentally. Equally fundamental is the variation in effect. Hence, it is useful to classify the types of authority according to the kind of claim to legitimacy typically made by each. In doing this it is best to start from modern and therefore more familiar examples” (Weber 1947, p.325).

In sum, legitimacy could be said to have four characteristics. It is first, moral and derived from the belief of the people. It is secondly subject to comparisons the people make continuously between what they have and what they could have instead. It is thirdly derived from different sources and have different types. And finally each component has different relative weight than the other components and each creates different outcomes. The next question would then be: what are the different types of legitimacy and how they differ in relative weight?

1.4.2 Where does legitimacy come from?

Weber, as usual, is the starting point to answer the question: Legitimacy comes from charismatic,

traditional and/or rational/legal sources (Weber 1947, p.328). *First*, in the case of charisma, legitimacy is “resting on devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him” (ibid.). charismatic leadership thus stems from extraordinary qualities that create an immediate personal consent from the masses. *Secondly*, legitimacy could be the result of “established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority under them” (ibid.). Traditional leadership thus comprises the rule of elders, tribes, customs and religions. Or, *finally*, legitimacy could rest on “a belief in the 'legality' of patterns of normative rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands” (Weber 1947, p.328). Rational leadership then refers to an ideal type of authority dependent on the acceptance of certain formal rules and procedures that are rationally valid and legally binding.

In Weber's view, a political regime generally establishes its rule using one or more of these kinds of legitimacy. Over time, however, a regime might change or diversify its legitimising basis. “For example, a ruler who might have initially based his legitimacy on charisma often attempts to shift to rational norms and procedures” (Al-Awadi 2004, p.7). The essential point is to adapt to emerging challenges and expectations and to maintain a durable authority. Applying the latter concepts on the Egyptian case, it was argued that Nasser's clear mode of legitimacy has been his personal charisma, although initially he relied on the ‘revolutionary legitimacy’ of 1952 (Dekmejian 1971). Sadat, on the other hand, was argued to have been exhibiting traditional, patrimonial, and some form of Weberian-rational legitimacy (Hinnebusch 1990).

Other authors have suggested numerous themes of legitimacy. Easton (1965) identified three types of legitimacy: personal, ideological and structural. *First*, To Easton, personal legitimacy, especially in systems “where the behaviour and personalities of the occupants of authority rule are of dominating importance” could become an important component in the overall legitimacy formula, to the extent that a leader “may violate the norms and prescribed procedures of the regime” (Easton 1965, pp.302–303). Al-Awadi (2004) argued that Easton's personal legitimacy includes Weber's charismatic legitimacy but covers a wider range of leadership phenomena. *Second*, Easton's ideological legitimacy is based on the ideological power of the ruling regime. In that sense, ideologies are, according to Easton (1965, p.290), “articulated sets of ideals, ends, and purposes, which help the members of the system to interpret the past, explain the present and offer a vision for the future...”. Easton's *third* category of legitimacy is the structure of the political system. This is seen in the various institutions and offices that make the political system functional (Al-Awadi 2004). These institutions are the frameworks, where “accepted norms and procedures are performed

in a manner that bestows legal legitimacy upon the system” (Al-Awadi 2004).

Al-Awadi, in his study on Mubarak’s legitimacy, argued that the main mode of legitimacy in Egypt, especially under Mubarak, was the eudaemonic legitimacy; that is particularly the legitimacy of economic achievement. Based on this mode, the regime claims legitimacy because it provides proper economic achievements that substantially modernise the country.

Indeed, the economic role of the state as a provider of social services for the society is crucial in creating the sense that the regime is working for the good of the people. This sort of legitimacy is called eudaemonic legitimacy. As Chen describes it:

“Eudaemonic legitimacy refers to a mode of legitimacy in which a regime justifies its rule by successful economic performance and effective provision of economic benefits to individuals in society. A regime based on this mode of legitimacy expects to exchange material goods for a popular belief in the obedience-worthiness of its rule and public support for the existing political order. By definition, the execution of this type of legitimacy depends on a regime's capability to deliver material resources for maintaining the base of support” (Chen 1997, p.423)

The logical question that will follow is, *what exactly, in the case of Egypt, is the most crucial pillar/s of legitimacy?*

1.4.3 What sources of legitimacy are most paramount in Egypt’s political system? How this thesis will approach legitimacy

Although legitimacy is mainly a Weberian theme, this thesis will link legitimacy to a Marxist-inspired structural approach in order to define the line of causality between deeper, structural forces and the outcome which is legitimacy. Mixing Marxist and Weberian methodologies is not alien to researches on Egypt¹. It is hypothesised in this thesis that structural forces, such as the dominant social classes and global forces, work as the engine of political change, impacting how legitimacy is established and why it is lost. The basic line of causality would then run from the base to superstructure. In the Egyptian case, thus, the thesis would look first at the most salient structural forces in the Egyptian history that shaped the modern state formation and hence shaped the framework within which legitimacy is built/changed/lost.

Before 1952, Egypt was a “semidependent state, ruled by the agrarian wing of the Egyptian bourgeoisie in alliance with foreign capital, under the aegis of the palace” (Abdel-Malek 1968, p.xi).

¹ One prime example is Hinnebusch’s book on Egyptian political under Sadat. See: (Hinnebusch 1988).

It had an underdeveloped, agrarian capitalist economy, with many features of oriental feudalism (Abdel-Malek, 1968, xii). It could be noted that the Egyptian revolution of 1952 was, in Hinnebusch words, “a classic case of a Third World movement against imperialism and the delayed dependent development which resulted from it. In nearly 100 years of domination, Western imperialism shaped Egypt to suit its own needs” (Hinnebusch 1988, p.11). The introduction of Western education and bureaucracy created a new middle class whose aspirations were frustrated by foreign control and the unpropitious domestic class structure (Wheelock 1960, p.2; Hinnebusch 1988, p.380; Podeh & Winckler 2004, p.14). One member of this class, Gamal Abdel Nasser Hussein, a military officer, established a secret society inside the army with the name: Free Officers. Nasser was able, along with a group of his generation, to join the army as a result of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 which opened the door to the sons of the Egyptian petty bourgeoisie to join the army. The ‘Free Officers’ movement was the representative of that new middle class (Marsot 1985, p.107; Wheelock 1960, p.3). Hinnebusch (1988, p.12) described the blueprint of the Free Officers movement as follows:

“The ‘Free Officers’ wanted to break the domination of imperialism, the foreign minorities and the landed upper class over the country, open up opportunities for the Egyptian middle class, do something for the peasants and create a strong modernized Egypt. They were convinced that they were the only untarnished or competent force in the political arena which could lead this project of national renaissance and social reform”

Nasserism was, in that sense, Egypt’s new middle class reaction to two main factors: Imperialism and underdevelopment (Hinnebusch 1988, pp.11–12; Hinnebusch 2006, p.380). Nasser’s words made that clear: “our main goal is that our country wins its full independence with no trace whatsoever of foreign occupation, and our wish for our citizens is to live a good life with dignity enjoying freedom and equality, and that the quality of life in Egypt reaches a high level” (Nasser 1953). Nasser’s answer to these two challenges, thus, was to establish a state that revolves around two main pillars: nationalism and development (Hinnebusch 1988; Ayubi 1991). Thus, the specific phase of the state formation in Egypt shaped the types of legitimacy that is most paramount. The performance of rulers in dealing with these two issues; i.e. nationalism and development, decided to a great extent their level of legitimacy. Even before Nasser, when King Farouk was perceived, by the army, and by vast segments of the population, to be unable to satisfy the standards of legitimacy with regard to attaining independence and achieving development, it was possible, even

quite easy, for Nasser and his associates to remove the king from power amidst the cheers of people. In like manner, because Nasser was perceived to be concerned and devoted to addressing Egypt's two main challenges, he was bestowed higher levels of legitimacy that was manifested in many situations (as it will be elaborated in the second chapter).

Thus, back to legitimacy types discussed earlier, the two basic types of legitimacy upon which Nasser founded the contemporary Egyptian state, could be argued to be *eudaemonic* legitimacy, that is building a welfare state to manage the long process of economic development and achieving social justice, and, closely pertaining to this, *ideological* legitimacy (Arab nationalism), that is to attain and defend Egypt's infant independence and make it the leader of the Middle East region. Obviously, these two types of legitimacy are integrative and both served the goal of modernising Egypt more rapidly. Nasser's charisma, arguably, was a product of his nationalist and welfarist policies rather than being an intrinsic feature in his own personality. That is why revolutionary, personal and charismatic legitimacy would be secondary to eudaemonic and ideological legitimacy and could be understood as the results of the promise, and the perceived achievement, of national independence and economic development in a very quick time.

Thus it could be argued that, in Egypt, what decides, to a large extent, what level of legitimacy each ruler will enjoy, is how successful the leader would be in convincing the most politically active segments of the population that the leader is genuinely serving these two interests; i.e. economic development and national independence. However, in the case when the structure, or reality, does not allow a ruler to satisfy one or both of these types of legitimacy (nationalism and/or eudaemonic), he would need to make up for the lack in his legitimacy by the third, most stable, source of legitimacy, which is *institutional* legitimacy. Failing to satisfy any of the three basic sources of legitimacy in Egypt would cost the regime its own survival. Now it is in order to have a look at the application of these three sources of legitimacy to the Egyptian case.

1.4.3.1 Eudaemonic legitimacy

Indeed, the dilemma of capitalist accumulation has always shaped the development strategy upon which the state would depend. Barrington Moore argues that political regimes have incentive to widen their coalition by distributing the returns of development widely, which is compatible with more democratic [hence legitimate] orientation of the regime. However, this conflicts with the economic rationale of early capitalism which relies on accumulating and concentrating capital: "if they prioritize distribution, capital will be alienated while favouring capital may require labour's

exclusion from ruling coalitions” (Hinnebusch 2010). The outcomes of this prioritisation process would determine a major part of the Egyptian state’s legitimacy post-1952. The main rationale of the Egyptian modern state, the basic legitimacy equation upon which the state was established, has often been a simple equation of modernisation from above. The state executes a project of modernising the reluctant population. The perceived quality of modernisation is one of the major bases upon which the state could claim that it has legitimacy (eudaemonic). Having this sort of legitimacy has often been used to justify state’s authoritarianism and its domination of the political and, even more, the societal spheres. In this context comes the notion of the welfarist policies in providing selective benefits to selected segments of the population to build a power base that has a stake in the regime’s survival.

The Egyptian state, after 1952, has defined itself as a welfare state and as a comprehensive system that addresses the basic needs of its citizens (Al-Awadi 2004). To most Egyptians, therefore, Egypt has been seen as a welfare state. A Nasserite social contract between the state and the people dictated that the state would provide goods and services in exchange for political docility and quiescence. This social contract became an essential component of the legitimacy of Nasser's revolution in 1952, as well as of the successive regimes thereafter. The state, whether under Sadat's *infatih* (open economy) or Mubarak's economic reform and structural adjustment, would not abandon entirely this contract (Al-Awadi 2004). This is perhaps why Mubarak has continuously warned against seeing economic reform as a retreat in the social role of the state (Al-Awadi 2004). Welfare programmes have been reduced since the 1980s and this obviously had implications for the legitimacy of the regime (Hinnebusch 2000). However, Mubarak's Egypt continued to maintain large remnants of the Nasserite welfare structure to preserve this source of legitimacy (Al-Awadi 2004).

Although Al-Awadi employed the term of eudaemonic legitimacy more as a term with economic content, I argue here that eudaemonic legitimacy is not only limited to economic and developmental services and benefits. It also includes other social tangible utilities. Examples for this would include security, especially in the Middle East where security is a scarce resource, and the quality of non-economic services provided by the state like the judicial system and other administrative services.

1.4.3.2 Ideological legitimacy

The second pillar of the Egyptian’s postcolonial state, after eudaemonic legitimacy, is ideological

legitimacy. However, ideological legitimacy acquires special importance as it is complicated by the identity dilemma of the Arab Middle East. Generally, identity is so crucial to studying legitimacy. Since identity helps, according to Barnett, to “define the interests of the state, by legitimating some courses of action while making others unimaginable” (Karawan 2002, p.179). In that sense, ideology is pertinent to identity. Ideology, according to Easton (1965, p.290), is “articulated sets of ideals, ends, and purposes, which help the members of the system to interpret the past, explain the present and offer a vision for the future”. In order for ideology to be effective in legitimizing a specific regime, it should correspond to some of the most cherished values of the national identity. In other words, ideology is the means through which identity is embodied. However, if there are different, even competing, national identities, this means that identity contest and ideological rivalry will be far more important to the stability of the political system than the option where there is identity consensus. It was noted by scholars that the lack of overlap between state and national identity could generate an inherently unstable and precarious situation, one that result in political, economic and symbolic exercises by the state in order to shift subnational loyalties to the symbols of the state” (Telhami & Barnett 2002, p.9). “The history of the Middle East suggests that identities sometimes conflict because certain environmental developments force actors to choose between demands imposed by one identity and those imposed by another. In this respect, states can have an ‘identity conflict’” (Telhami & Barnett 2002, p.15). Hinnebusch (2005, p.153) further clarifies that notion, asserting that

“the relative incongruity between state and identity is perhaps the most distinctive feature of the Middle East states system. In the Westphalia model that European expansion ostensibly globalized, it is the congruity between identity and sovereignty, nation and the state, that endows states and the states system with legitimacy”. He added, “[i]nstead of the natural processes of sorting out boundaries through war and dynastic marriage which took place in the northern world, the imposed boundaries [by the Western imperial powers] of the modern Middle East state system fragmented the region arbitrarily into a multitude of competing, often artificial, state units on the basis of the great power interests, not indigenous wishes”.

Although Egypt, according to Karawan, is “a clear case of ethnic and cultural homogeneity” (Karawan 2002, p.155), and it is arguably, along with Turkey and Iran, one of “those societies in the Middle East with substantial peasantries, hence attachment to the land” (Hinnebusch 2005, p.153), however, Egyptian elites have often been divided over which identity should have primacy

in determining Egypt's orientation towards the world: Egyptian national identity, Arab identity, Islamic identity or Western/Mediterranean identity. Thus, "even in a society with significant ethnic and linguistic homogeneity, different identities have been constructed and employed to shape the country's orientation and its identification of allies and enemies" (Karawan 2002, p.156). As Hinnebusch puts it, "the Middle East has a unique combination of *both* strong *sub-state* identities and powerful *supra-state* identities that, together, dilute and limit the mass loyalty to the state" (Hinnebusch 2005, p.153). Indeed, Egypt has been much affected by the strong supra-state identities; i.e. Arabism and Islamism, and, to quite lesser extent, by sub-state loyalties. It has often been possible, as Hinnebusch (2003; 2002, pp.7–8) notes, for the counter-elites to exploit the incongruence between nation and state, or identity and sovereignty, to mobilise segments around supra-state identity; i.e. mainly Islamism after the June 1967 War. Even before 1967, Nasser was only able to defeat Islamism and consolidate his rule by adopting a version of Arab nationalism that became the official ideology of the state. This has changed after Nasser, under Sadat and Mubarak, who made Egyptianism the state's official ideology (with selective employment of other ideologies).

The identity conflict that Egypt has been living for more than a century reflected itself in an on-going struggle between three ideational conceptions: Arabism, Islamism and Egyptian nationalism. The collapse of the Ottoman caliphate in the beginning of the 20th century created an "identity vacuum" (Hinnebusch 2005, p.154) for Egyptians (Tadros 2013). The caliphate represented the ultimate reference of legitimacy, and its demise left Egyptians, especially after the formal independence in 1922, facing the tough question of deciding who has the right to rule; in other words: legitimacy. The response at the time was twofold: Arabism and Islamism. Both Arabism and Islamism, "challenged the legitimacy of the individual states and spawned movements promoting their unity as a cure for the fragmentation of the felt community" (Hinnebusch 2005, p.154). Indeed, "trans-state identities—Arabism and Islam—are, for many people, more emotionally compelling than identification with the state" (Hinnebusch 2002, p.30).

In this regard, *foreign policy* is especially salient as a crucial element of ideological legitimacy. Foreign policy is the main arena in which identity is constructed and reconstructed. According to (Campbell 1998; Johnston 1999), foreign policy is central to legitimation since foreign policy is a process of manifestation of defining boundaries between "ingroups and outgroups in the modern state system" (Johnston 1999:10). Kneuer (2011, pp.5–6) argued that foreign policy, in authoritarian regimes, could attain strategic relevance for legitimation in two ways:

"... foreign policy action impacts...dimension of legitimacy: the 'we-identity' and sense of belonging. This dimension is particularly relevant if participation and

interest aggregation are partially or completely lacking. Therefore, authoritarian government often revert to connecting directly to the public by appealing to national identity or by using the ‘national interest’ argument...Moreover, the ‘national identity/national interest’ argument stimulates a certain degree of responsiveness as the government declares that it will act according to the assumed homogenous interests of the citizens.”

The aforementioned role of foreign policy as a legitimising ideology appears particularly relevant to the case of Egypt. Under Mubarak, Sedgwick (2010) noted the delegitimising consequences of Mubarak’s foreign policy. He observed that, in the last few years before 2011, small legitimacy “explosions”/losses were incurred to the Mubarak regime by the ‘Jenin massacre’ in 2002, by the invasion of Iraq in 2003, by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 2006, and by the siege of Gaza in 2008. The events that followed asserted the importance of foreign policy in determining the level of the regime’s legitimacy. Similarly, after 2011, the ‘conspiracy’ on Egypt, from different international actors as claimed by the security apparatuses and its followers, became the major arena in which legitimacy was decided.

In the same context, *personal legitimacy*, as defined by Easton (1965), will be viewed in this research as a sub-type of ideational legitimacy. The impact of personal leadership could not in reality be separated from ideology. Personal legitimacy, especially in systems "where the behaviour and personalities of the occupants of authority roles are of dominating importance" could become an important component in the overall legitimacy formula, to the extent that a leader "may violate the norms and prescribed procedures of the regime" (Easton 1965:302-303). Indeed, without Nasser, it would not be feasible to imagine Nasserism. How the personal traits of each leader of Egypt played a role in ideologically legitimising/delegitimising his regime is what this section will discuss in relevant chapters.

1.4.3.3 Institutional legitimacy

Institutional legitimacy is the most stable source of legitimacy, as Weber maintained. It is also based on Easton’s structural legitimacy; the structure of the political system, which resembles to a great extent Weber’s legal-rational legitimacy, as both simply mean ‘the belief in the system as such’ (Al-Awadi 2004). Institutional legitimacy is “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms,

values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman 1995, p.574). This is seen in the various institutions and offices that make the political system functional (Al-Awadi 2004). These institutions are the frameworks, where “accepted norms and procedures are performed in a manner that bestows legal legitimacy upon the system” (Al-Awadi 2004). Institutionalising the system links Easton’s structural legitimacy with Huntington’s concept of institutionalisation (Huntington 1968). According to Huntington (1968:12-20), institutionalization is the process by which organisations and procedures acquire value and stability. Thus, the first component of institutional legitimacy is to what extent the state institutions abide by the law and, more deeply, with the norms and values that have been socially constructed and acquired public acceptance. One lucid example, which will be further explored in details in the fifth chapter, is the case of *tawreeth* (the inheritance of power from Hosni Mubarak to his younger son Gamal). The *tawreeth* project was perceived by the public in Egypt not only as a violation of law but also and more importantly as a violation of the norms and values upon which the Egyptian republic rested.

The second most important part under the category of institutional legitimacy is democratic legitimacy. Indeed, having a democratic rule and procedures grants the system a considerable level of institutional legitimacy. However, three points related to democratic legitimacy deserve further clarification. *First*, the difference in the state formation between Western and Middle East states entails that the relative weight of different legitimacy sources differs between the two types of states. This has been proved in reality, for example, by the failure of the fair and free Presidential elections in Egypt in 2012 in bringing about stability in the country. Only one year after his inauguration, mass protests against the first civilian elected President Mohamed Morsi erupted everywhere in Egypt. Regardless of the situation itself, it is certain that not all Egyptians perceived Mohamed Morsi as a legitimate leader although he acquired power through fair and free elections. A significant portion of Egyptians who put Egyptian identity over Islamic or Arab Identity perceived him, amidst the process of identity contest that ensued post the January uprising, as an agent of a non-patriotic group, the MB, which works secretly to alter the established identity of Egypt for the benefit of foreign powers and the so-claimed “Islamic Umma”. Whether what happened in June and July 2013 was another popular uprising, as its supporters argue, or a pure, classic military coup d’état, as opponents insist, it enforces the belief that democratic legitimacy, albeit important, is not the most critical source of legitimacy in Egypt, as there is no wide consensus on the meaning and the norms of democracy. *Secondly*, in this context, it could be argued that the importance of democracy as a source of legitimacy correlates inversely with the level upon which the regime relies on other sources of legitimacy. Wherever the regime has considerable level of ideological and/or eudaemonic

legitimacy, it could rely less on the democratic process as a source of legitimacy without risking its stability. If the regime, however, is perceived as void of eudaemonic or ideological legitimacy, demands for democracy increase. *Finally*, the legitimacy of some parts of the regime could be higher than other parts of the same regime. For example, the legitimacy of the Army in Egypt was higher than the legitimacy of other components of the regime, such as the ruling party, which led to a quasi-unanimous consensus in the wake of the Mubarak regime's collapse that the army should be the architect of the transitional period and oversees the new, democratic political process.

In sum, legitimacy in postcolonial Egypt rests on three pillars: eudaemonic legitimacy, ideological legitimacy and finally institutional legitimacy. The importance of each of these types differs over time according to the specific features of state formation in the country at a specific point time. This thesis's task is to offer a narrative of the evolution of the state's legitimacy through time from Nasser to Sisi.

1.4.4 Who grants legitimacy?

The last point in this theoretical framework is concerned with answering the following question: who does grant legitimacy? If legitimacy means the legitimacy of the ruler/regime/state, then who grants it? The logical answer is that it is the 'people' who give legitimacy. However, this answer is rather vague and rather general. The influence of different groups and classes in any society is not equal. It is argued in this thesis that three specific groups could be highlighted: *hezb el-kanaba* (the couch party²), the youth of the middle class, and the Islamists. It should be noted here that these groups were selected due to their important political roles in the postcolonial state. Although their roles have changed during the last 60 years since the revolution of 1952, they kept their vital contribution in the formation of legitimacy. They are not indeed all possible groups in the society, but they are the most important as far as legitimacy is concerned. They are not defined by class but can be described in terms of class. In sum, these three groups could be described as political streams whose political orientations are linked to their occupations, generations and levels and sources of income. It also

² *Hezb el-kanaba* is a term that was invented by revolutionaries and protesters to make fun of the politically apathetic. The accurate description of couch party "members" are those who prefer home, sitting on a couch, watching news and talk shows on TV, to being involved in politics or demonstrations. Another stream could be added to the couch party, which is *el-aghlabya el-samta* (the silent majority), which is used by state-run media, as well as some governmental officials from the old regime. *El-aghlabya el-samta* is more or less close to *hezb el-kanaba*. The difference, however, is that the silent majority is supposedly against the revolution and not completely indifferent. Thus, anti-revolution figures might occasionally call on that alleged majority to take it to the street to support the ruling Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) and object to its critics.

important to note that the relative weight and political importance of each of these groups differ through time. Thus, for example, and as it will be shown in the following section and in details in the sixth chapter, the relative weight of the first group (couch party) decreased from the time of Nasser to the time of Mubarak, while, on the contrary, the relative weight of the second group (youth of the middle class) grew in importance, as the liberalisation of the economy empowered them and hence increased their share of impacting legitimacy.

In the following section there is a brief introduction to each of those groups.

1.4.4.1 *Hezb el-Kanaba* (Couch Party)³

This virtual party was mainly composed of middle class members who are connected one way or another to the bureaucratic apparatus of the state⁴. They preferred stability to revolution, status-quo and gradual reform to radical transformation. Indeed, the postcolonial Arab republics of the mid-20th century were characterised by the rise of a state-linked middle class: a group that had taken advantage of state employment and free education to rise above the poverty line (Diwan 2014, pp. 38–39). Indeed, that was not new to Egypt. Since the days of Mohamed Ali, the middle class was linked to the state to the extent that the “‘bureaucracy’ became almost synonymous with the modern Egyptian state” (Hunter 1999, p.17, quoted in Shaalan 2014, p.87). However, Nasser took the state’s relation with the middle class to a higher level. Nasser was the first ruler to enlarge and use the bureaucratic middle class as the main source of power and the foremost-targeted segment for his claims to legitimacy. By enlarging the bureaucracy to reach 1,500,000 employees (in 1970), Nasser created a new class and designed most of the state’s policies and discourse to address them and guarantee their acceptance of the regime. Under Sadat and Mubarak, the bureaucracy continued to grow, hence enlarging the size of the middle class. In 1981, the number of government-employed middle class reached 2,500,000 persons, with a one million increase in 10 years. By the end of Mubarak’s rule in 2011, 6,500,000 persons were working in the state’s administrative apparatus (Beshara 2016). That continuous increase could be attributed to the normal ‘law of inertia’ which kept the process of ‘guaranteeing full employment’ working as it is, and, secondly, to the inability of the post-Nasser’s rulers to change the legitimacy base of the post-colonial state by curbing employment in the government.

³ This group could also be labelled ‘State-linked Middle Class’ (SMC).

⁴ The role of state institutions, such as the army and security apparatuses, will be addressed later in this thesis as part of the intra-regime rivalry. Although the lower ranks of these institutions could be categorised under the state-linked middle class, however, these groups act, in general, as part of their institutions not as members of their classes. This is mainly due to the high level of institutional discipline in these institutions.

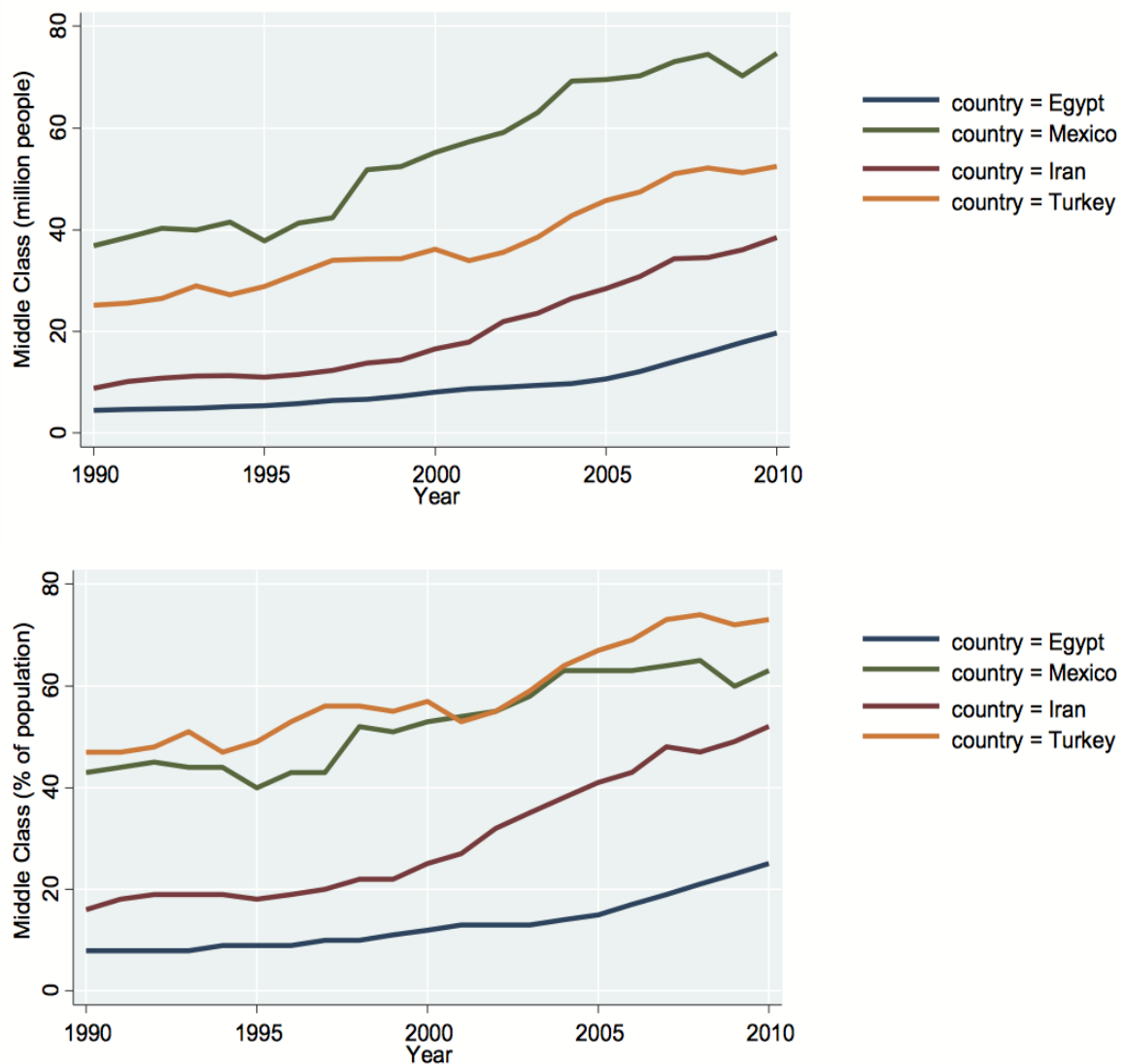
1.4.4.2 The youth of the middle class (YMC)

The importance of the middle class in establishing a democratic political entity has been emphasized since the time of Aristotle (Ozbudun 2005, p.96). Aristotle's views have been echoed for centuries to come. In the case of Egypt and the Middle East, the crucial importance of understanding the role of the middle class in politics has been the subject of many studies (Diwan 2014; El-Raggal 2014; Brandi & Buge 2014; Xiaoqi 2012; Shaalan 2014). This thesis thus will focus on examining the political role of the middle class in constructing and withdrawing legitimacy from the consecutive ruling regimes in Egypt.

Counter to the dominant perspectives that the Egyptian middle class has shrunk under Mubarak, what actually occurred was the opposite. The factual evidence and logical reasoning indicate that the absolute numbers of the MC and its percentage in the society have dramatically increased. Instead of debating the numerical shrink of the MC's size, it could be argued that its quality of life, actual value, and standard of living have descended in relation to its expectations, sense of self-worth, and believed value. The influential Egyptian political economist, Dr. Galal Amin, offered what could be the most authoritative account on the evolution of the MC under the post-colonial Egyptian state (Amin 2008a; Amin 2008b; Amin 2008c; Amin 2008d; Amin 2014). While the MC was clearly distinguished, yet very small, and enjoyed a prestigious social and economic status before 1952, it started to expand dramatically under Nasser in the welfare state that he sponsored. The dramatic expansion in the MC continued under Sadat and, even more, under Mubarak, through the continuous joining of the lower classes in the countryside to the MC. However, to acquire the status of the MC was no longer, as it was in Nasser's days, linked to education and working in the government. With the consolidation of the free market economy in Egypt and the immigration of millions of Egyptians from lower classes to the Gulf countries benefiting from the petro-dollar, social upgrading became more linked to commercial, trade and business activities. Thus, the status of the state-linked middle class, declined, as they had no means whatsoever to enhance their social status or economic posture. Their sense of their once-esteemed status was severely impacted. Those were the main losers from neoliberalism.

As demonstrated in Figure 6.1., below, the Egyptian middle class underwent a period of significant growth after the launching of the economic reform program in 1991. Whilst 1 in 10 Egyptians belonged to the middle class in 1990, this figure had doubled by 2010, with 20% of the Egyptian population being represented by the middle class.

Figure 1.1.



Source: (Brandi & Buge 2014, p.13)

Many scholars agreed that the middle class plays the most important role in politics. As far as the Arab uprisings are concerned, there is now widely acknowledged agreement that the main motor behind these uprisings was the middle class, and its youth in particular. Indeed, this does not deny the fact that other social classes have also participated – even in much bigger numbers - in the Arab popular uprising. The urban poor and the organised worker class are two important examples. However, the middle class was both the initiator and the leader of the uprising. In Xiaoqi's words, "the uprising had the middle class at its helm" (Xiaoqi 2012, p.80). Fukuyama (2013) confirmed the latter concept stating that:

“All over the world... today's political turmoil has a common theme: the failure of governments to meet the rising expectations of the newly prosperous and educated... In Turkey and Brazil, as in Tunisia and Egypt before them, political protest has been led not by the poor but by young people with higher-than-average levels of education and income. They are technology-savvy and use social media like Facebook and Twitter to broadcast information and organize demonstrations”

As Diwan noted, Egypt and Tunisia witnessed the emergence of the Arab Uprisings on the hands of the young secularist middle class, with the newly established market-oriented middle class becoming more prevalent as a result of the liberalisation of the 1990s-2000s economy (Diwan 2014, p.29,34). This new middle class stretched across a number of (primarily) small-scale industrialists and merchants, who have been positively impacted by market-oriented reforms as well as highly skilled labourers in multinational and major private firms working in the formal private and foreign sector: a group that was minimal yet growing constantly (Diwan 2014, p.39). Among them, the most influential and pioneering in shaping a new political consciousness of the NMC was the emerging class of political and human rights activists (*noshataa*). This was a group who has been engaged, during the years of the open political atmosphere of the 2000s, in working with international human rights and civil society organisations.

1.4.4.3 Islamists

The Islamist stream in Egypt is led by the MB and Salafi movements. The MB is originally a lower middle class's movement whose support base increased with time to rely basically on the urban and professional middle class (Jones & Cullinane 2013; Adam 2013, p.20; Al-Farouq 2004; Néron-Bancel 2013, pp.13–14; Laub 2014; Woods & Alizadeh 2013; Harvard Divinity School 2016). It was established in 1928 by Hassan Al-Banna, a charismatic schoolteacher who was influenced by the ideas of Sheikh Mohammed Abdou. The MB aimed at bridging the gap between traditional religious teachings and the modernity that Egypt went through in the first few decades of the twentieth century. The group became an influential political movement heavily involved in Egypt's struggle for independence against the British occupation, in addition to “advocating the establishment of a religious state and the imposition of sharia law” (Osman 2011, p.91). Supported by its wide base in the middle class, the MB managed to win almost every election post-2011 in which it participated, including the presidential elections in 2012.

The second wings of Islamism is the Salafi movement. Salafis emphasise close adherence to the model of the *Salaf* or 'predecessors', who are the first few generations of Muslims (Durie 2013). Salafism is a worldview and a way of deciding religious questions more than one specific organisation. The principle Salafi's preference is to adhere to the practices of the first generations, and therefore they reject 'innovations' introduced by later generations of Muslims, and, indeed, by non-Muslims (Durie 2013). It opposes everything which is not based upon the 'best example' of Prophet Muhammad, and it explicitly rejects appeal to intellectual concepts associated with western thought, whether from economics, education, ethics or politics. Because of the Salafi's position from Western democracy and politics, Salafism has been described as apolitical. They did not participate in the January uprising or in the political stir that led to it. However, when Egypt witnessed democratic opening post-2011, they assumed bigger political roles and were actively involved in politics to the extent that they formed a political party (the Nour Party), and participated in the parliamentary elections and won a surprising 20% of the total seats of the parliament. The thesis will focus more on the MB as the most organised and influential opposition group throughout Egypt's contemporary history, with the role of the Salafis highlighted after the 2011 uprising.

1.5 Methodology

This thesis has employed a single-case study design focusing on political events and discourses in post-colonial Egypt with special reference to the period 2000-2016. This time frame was chosen because it coincides with the increasing external and internal pressures on the Mubarak regime to open up, which led Mubarak to hold multi-candidate presidential elections in 2005, and was therefore a time of increased expectations and intense debates about Egypt's political future that ended with the January uprising in 2011 and the ensuing events. As has been mentioned previously, Egypt is not just representative of Arab states but has widely been regarded as a harbinger of developments in the other Arab states. Studying Egypt provides a strategic entry to Middle East politics.

As it was discussed earlier, measuring legitimacy is indeed a problematic exercise. Arguably, there are two approaches to measuring legitimacy (Al-Awadi 2004; Sedgwick 2010): the view from above and the view from below. The view from above focuses on formal structures and aggregate processes, while the view from below focuses on public opinion. In other words, the view from above is concerned with assessing the efficacy of the system itself. At the system level, legitimacy is viewed from above, where the focus is on the coherence of the regime's ideology,

institutional efficiency and ability to deliver welfare as promised. The weakness of this approach, Weatherford (1992) argues, is its tendency to concentrate on formal structures and aggregate processes, and its inadequate recognition of the complementary need to observe the political system's "subjective" aspects. The second perspective, which views legitimacy from the grassroots level, focuses on the individual's beliefs and sentiments. It hence measures legitimacy based on questionnaires and surveys that ask citizens questions about their political interests and involvement, beliefs about social relations relevant to collective action and degree of optimism about the responsiveness of the political systems (Al-Awadi 2004: 17-18). Both approaches, in Al-Awadi's view, have been developed with respect to well-established democracies, where the issue of legitimacy is not just visible, but also measurable. In the case of Egypt, Al-Awadi (2004) argues, it is often difficult to carry out either approach systematically. However, Sedgwick (2010) employed a mixture of a 'view from above' using aggregate data and a 'view from below' using events "which serve to reveal that which is normally invisible, rather as a small explosion allows a geologist to make a seismograph".

This thesis will assess legitimacy from both sides. From above, the discourse of the regime, its statements, policies and its explanations, writings of thinkers and journalists who represented the regime, will be analysed to get an understanding of what claim of legitimacy the regime does. Then, from below, several measures will be employed to draw a picture of the status of legitimacy in the society. These from-below measures would include, foremost, the scope and intensity of political violence. As was explained earlier in this chapter, legitimacy is the most peaceful approach to attain political stability. Resorting to violence is indeed a sign of lack of legitimacy. However, not all political violence necessarily indicates lack of legitimacy. For example, violence against one specific group or class, could mean that only this group believes that the regime is illegitimate, while other groups might still believe it is legitimate. Thus, a cautious analysis of the nature of dissent would be vital to ensure that we reach more accurate understanding. Other from-below measures would include the discourse of opposition. What 'people' say is an important indicative of the status of legitimacy. Influential thinkers and writers, prominent media stars, social media influencers and political leaders, are indeed a substantial source of having a proper conception of the status of legitimacy. How they describe the legitimacy of the regime, what values they use when measuring how legitimate the regime is, what words and pictures they employ and to what extent it reflects a belief in legitimacy or illegitimacy. Other criteria would include polls and elections result. The turnout of participation in elections is indeed an important factor. This is particularly true when we compare for example between elections before and after 2011. For example, the participation

percentage in the first multicandidate presidential election in 2005 was 23% according to the official number of the Egyptian government (7 million out of total 32 million registered voter). This percentage, in the presidential elections in 2012, after the democratic opening in 2011, rose to almost 50% (24 million out of 51 million registered voter).

However, the findings of the analysis of those indicators were supplemented by interviews with members of the ex-ruling elite, including top diplomats and members of the Supreme Council of Policies that was headed by the President's son, Gamal, and members of the new business class who were also close to the top echelons of decision-making in the regime. The researcher was well positioned to access those circles, as his job—a diplomat in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry since 2004—granted him access to high-level personal contacts, including the targeted sample. Furthermore, the publishing of some of the political diaries of the *ancien regime*'s top officials have facilitated the task of getting deeper information on the dynamics of the collapsed regime and on the period after 2011.

On the other hand, interviews with a selected sample of young men and women who were engaged in the events of 2011 and afterwards focused on why those people had the risk and the initiative and took to the streets in 25th of January. This should clarify why and how these segments of the depoliticized youth believed that the regime was void of any legitimacy. In addition to my personal contacts with many of those youth, it is now evident that most of them were mobilized by the Facebook page 'We are All Khaled Said', that was created by the Google executive and political activist, Wael Ghonim (Ghonim 2012). The researcher was able to contact many of the depoliticized first-time participants in the first day of the uprising.

Finally, a process-tracing through examining the findings of my interviews and discourse analysis was conducted. The process tracing method was selected in light of its ability to make an important contribution to both a positivist and an interpretivist empirical approach to a case study research (Vennesson 2011). In Vennesson's (2011) words: "process tracing also provides an opportunity to combine positivist and interpretivist approaches in the making of a case study...allowing the researcher to explore both the causal 'what' and the causal 'how'".

1.6 The thesis argument as developed through its chapters

After this introductory *first* chapter, the *second* chapter will lay the foundation of the legitimacy's formula of postcolonial Egypt under its first founder, Gamal Abdel Nasser. One of the main arguments of this chapter is that Nasser created the legitimacy criteria with which his predecessors

had to comply, or at least attempt to do so. The Egyptian state has indeed transformed under the leadership of *Nasser* (1952-1970). The socioeconomic and political reengineering that he created went deep in the very fabric of the state itself. The second chapter contends that Nasser's legitimacy needs a more elaborate analysis than the usual assumption that he relied on revolutionary and charismatic legitimacy. It is true that Nasser started his system based on revolutionary and charismatic legitimacy. However, he soon, more importantly, strengthened his temporary, initial mode of legitimacy with two more stable sources of legitimacy: eudaemonic legitimacy and ideological legitimacy. Nasser's eudaemonic legitimacy was based on the welfare policies that he adopted to create social mobility in the society. This type of legitimacy created one crucial criterion with relation to the state's economic role. It became expected from the state to pursue a strong interventionist policy to maintain social justice in the society. Nasser's legitimacy was based on a middle-class/peasant alliance. The middle class was a state-sponsored large group that was absorbed in the growing state's bureaucracy that Nasser created. Secondly, ideological legitimacy was based on Arab nationalism that Nasser pioneered during most of his rule (until the 1967 War). As far as ideological legitimacy is concerned, Nasser created the criterion that Egypt's natural role is to lead the Arab World as a regional power. Institutional legitimacy under Nasser was indeed non-present. Instead of relying on democratic legitimacy, Nasser established a single-party rule that is allied with the security apparatuses to ensure the discipline of the opposition forces and those segments in the society that did not pay allegiance to his rule.

The *third* chapter will discuss and analyse the status of legitimacy under Sadat. The argument here will examine how Sadat attempted to maintain legitimacy and adapt to the post-populist phase. Unable, because of the changing structural conditions, to satisfy the high legitimacy standards inherited from Nasser with regard to ideology and welfare, *Sadat* applied three legitimization's strategies. First, he claimed a new source of legitimacy that was not highlighted at Nasser's days as a major claim of legitimacy: institutional legitimacy. Second, in order to make up for the shortage of his ability to satisfy ideological legitimacy as defined by Arab nationalism, he resorted to a mix of Egyptian nationalism and Islamism to offset Arab nationalism. Third, as Sadat was unable economically to continue enlarging Nasser's welfare state, which put the state's eudaemonic legitimacy at risk, he introduced economic liberalisation (*infitah*) and created a new capitalist class hoping that by allying with this class, the growth of the economy would be fostered. Indeed, Sadat's radical transformation of mostly everything Nasser built caused severe loss of his legitimacy, however, it simultaneously gained legitimacy from new, yet smaller, constituencies. The new bourgeoisie, capitalist and petit, that Sadat helped creating, was his prime bestower of legitimacy.

Then, the *fourth* and *fifth* chapters will discuss the Mubarak's 30 years rule. The *fourth* chapter will examine Mubarak's legitimization strategies in the first twenty years of his rule. Like Sadat, he primarily claimed institutional legitimacy and eudaemonic legitimacy respectively. Also, like Sadat, he continued balancing Egyptian nationalism with Islamism to fill in the ideological vacuum created by the withdrawal of Egypt from leading the Arab nationalism. Simultaneously, he had to accept neoliberal economic reforms to address the increasing structural crisis of the economy, hoping that the growth of the private sector would generate job opportunities and create economic growth which may enhance the regime's eudaemonic legitimacy. The *fifth* chapter would then explore the last ten years (2000-2011) of Mubarak's era where the rise of the political influence of his son, Gamal, became the core feature of this period.

The *sixth* chapter would then analyse the reasons for the collapse of Mubarak's legitimacy that led to the 2011 uprising. Under Mubarak's 30 years of rule, especially with the effect of neoliberal economy, the relative weights of legitimacy have changed, as well as the social composition. Newer classes and groups were formed with different, even contradictory, conceptions of legitimacy. *First*, the accumulation of the longest serious wave of neoliberal economic policies in Egypt, from the 1990s and for more than uninterrupted 20 years, created an obviously distinctive new middle class (NMC). This group, consisted mainly of non-state-linked young people who are working generally in the private sector, foreign corporations and Non-governmental organisations. With the quick rise of their material standards of living, their political expectations rose high too. They adopted a conception of legitimacy that is similar to the modern, Western one. For them, legitimacy stems directly from democratic rule and political and personal freedoms. For this group, the 'semi-open' society that Mubarak championed was not enough. The presence of Mubarak's son, Gamal, and the apparent grooming for him to inherit the presidency from his father (*tawreeth*), clashed with any kind of democratic institutional legitimacy that Mubarak had invested in. *Second*, the relative reliance on Islamists for legitimacy, which allowed them to grow more in the society to the extent of even penetrating it, created a larger than ever social base for Islamism in Egypt. This was a group that has a radically divergent conception of ideological legitimacy, that is, Islamist legitimacy where the focus is ruling according to the Islamic Sharia. The alliance between all segments of the middle class was able to mobilise massive numbers of people in the streets to topple the Mubarak regime.

Finally, the *seventh* chapter before the conclusion will discuss the post-Mubarak era. It argues that there is a vacuum of legitimacy and that the main theme of political struggle in Egypt is searching for legitimacy. Instead of establishing democratic rule as the January uprising demanded,

it was possible for other non-democratic forces to revitalise other sources of legitimacy, namely ideological legitimacy, and transform the political struggle in Egypt from democrats/non-democrats to patriots/traitors and secularists/Islamists. This was continued with a strong revival of nationalism, within the SMC in particular, which the new regime of Sisi is based on.

Chapter Two

Founding the Benchmarks of Legitimacy

Nasser relied on two main sources to claim legitimacy: eudaemonic and ideological. That was the result of the main two challenges Egypt faced at the time: underdevelopment and foreign occupation.

2.1 The political economy of legitimacy

Nasser's eudaemonic legitimacy was based on a wide social coalition. The state's role in this coalition was to make great 'achievements' for the society so that the society deems the state legitimate. The role of the state was not limited to providing goods and services, public and non-public-, to the 'people' with affordable prices, in return for public consent. It indeed extended that to the idea that the state is the 'leader of the modernisation's train' which undertakes great achievements serving the common good. In doing so, one of the most salient features of Nasserism was the dismantling of the traditional bourgeoisie and creation of a new 'state bourgeoisie'. As Abdel-Malek (1968, p. xvii) puts it, "the strategic sectors of the national economy have been taken away from the Egyptian bourgeoisie and brought under the ownership and control of the Egyptian state". It is there understood that a "legacy of mistrust between the Egyptian bourgeoisie and the state" has been created (Hinnebusch 2003, p.221). Nasser never allowed the bourgeoisie the authority to accumulate capital "independently of the state" (Bush 1999, p.15). Dominating the majority of the economy, Nasser's state "achieved a high degree of autonomy from all social forces" (Farah 2009, p.35). The social alliance of the state included the middle class, government and public sectors employees, the working class and the peasantry. As Hinnebusch noted, most Egyptians were encompassed in the alliance with the Nasser regime, with the exception only of hostile elements of the old elite, and residues of opposition on the extreme left and Islamic right (Hinnebusch 1988, p.29). Nasser indeed created a broad cross-class populist power base from which he sought to gain legitimacy. Although the state under Sadat and Mubarak changed its alliance by adding new social components and abandoning others, it was never able to altogether abandon the populist social alliance that Nasser made as it was successfully entrenched in the very fabric of the state-society relation rather than being a feature of Nasser's own regime only.

It is now in order to look deeper into the roots of Nasser's welfarism. The characteristics of Egypt's chronic economic crisis since its formal independence in 1923 are well-known: "overpopulation, poverty, illiteracy, social inequality, and underdevelopment" (Palmer et al. 1988, p.2)⁵. The economic dilemma in Egypt, in the view of Charles Issawi, could be traced to the pattern of development during the last two hundred years since 1800 (Issawi 1990, p.177). Mohamed Ali started the first attempt to modernise Egypt to serve the establishment and consolidation of its modern army. After Ali, Egypt's course of development could be described as export-oriented economy: exporting cotton and agricultural goods and importing everything else (Issawi 1990, p. 179). From the period 1922-1952, the development path Egypt took had led to a dead end due to shrinkage in the amount of cultivable land per head, decline in per capita GNP, and the conversion of Egypt from a grain exporter into a greater importer (Issawi 1990, pp.181–182). From 1930-1936, Egypt witnessed an important development. The commercial treaties that restricted Egypt's tariff autonomy lapsed and the capitulations that restricted its fiscal autonomy were abolished. The government seized this opportunity to embark on an industrialization program based on tariff protection and directed at import-substitution. The tax system was also reformed and income taxes were imposed for the first time (Issawi 1990, p. 182). This period also witnessed an important aspect, which was the growth of an indigenous bourgeoisie. Issawi noted however that all these developments after 1930 could not offset the effects of a stagnant agriculture and rapid population growth. Per capita incomes and the level of living had declined sharply and there was a sense of economic failure which was indeed one factor behind the 1952 revolution (Issawi 1990, pp.182–183). There was also a deep social crisis of inequality. "The same 12000 families of big landowners who held some 50 percent of all cultivable land also included 11000 major shareholders who held some 40 percent of joint-stock companies" (Farah 2009, p.31).

In order to address Egypt's economic problems, Nasser's chosen approach was a version of etatism, one that could be called populist etatism, or simply Nasserism. Etatism assumed establishing a powerful state to lead modernisation from above (Hinnebusch 1988, p. 14). However, the notion of etatism did not start in Egypt with Nasser. Its origins come back to after the First World War due to the severe economic crisis that engulfed the economy as a result of its sole dependence on exporting cotton to Britain. The government, in 1916, constituted a committee to review the status of the Egyptian economy and issue recommendations to overcome the crisis. Wahba stated that this was the first ideological formulation to bluntly assert that the establishing of national

⁵ For comprehensive accounts on Egypt's economic dilemma, see Mabro (1974), and for the crisis especially before 1952, see Issawi (1990).

industrialization assisted by the state was the solution to the crisis (Wahba, 1994, pp. 26–30). That direction was deepened during and after the Second World War to the extent that a complete etatist ideology was formulated and spread among political and intellectual elites alike (Wahba, 1994, pp. 33–43). In Wahba's words:

“...we find ourselves at the end of that period, immediately prior to the Coup, with all the policies which the Junta subsequently followed, having been clearly enunciated for some years. The industrialization of Egypt had long been advocated for the development of the country. The role of the state in initiating and fostering industrialization had been amply recognized by many thinkers. Indeed, state sponsorship of economic and social development had become the established policy recommendation. The hostility which was expressed towards foreign capital was an ideological by-product of the struggle for national liberation ... [and]... the sentiment was shared.... by the rising local entrepreneurial class. Finally, concern for the plight of agriculture and the apparently unanimous desire for an Agrarian Reform, can be seen in the fact that the last cabinet before the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) came to power, was seriously considering taking such a step. When the free officers took power in 1952, all the components of etatist ideology had been widely voiced”.

Thus, although it has been argued that Nasser's economic policy was impulsive and a reaction to external and internal events (El-Ghonemy 2003, p.75), this argument fails to convince, as it does not answer why most of the 'reactions' were on the left. The more convincing contention is, as it has been showed, that etatism was in the background of the Free Officers' minds, especially Nasser, and it constituted the framework within which Nasser selected his options to cope with the external environment that his new regime faced. This is important as it shows how legitimacy building does not stem from a vacuum. The structural reality creates the menu of options from which the ruler chooses. Thus, it was Nasser who turned the notion of etatism into reality; i.e. Nasserism. It could be argued that two main forces were behind Nasser's approach. The first motive was to strengthen the state capabilities in order to escape from the dependency system and challenge Western hegemony (Hinnebusch 2014, p.7). The second objective was to ensure that the population is experiencing economic achievements that could legitimise the regime and justify its authoritarian grip on power. At the heart of the state's economic approach was the trade-off between political participation for socioeconomic benefits (Bush 1999, p.14; Hinnebusch 2003, p.219). The profit-making and efficiency concerns, thus, were not the basic motive of economic policies, a fact that would later have grievous consequences on both the Egyptian economy and the legitimacy of the state.

Thus, the state's role in the economic life of the society increased dramatically. Before the July 1961 socialist decrees, the private sector was the dominant sector in the economy. It accounted for 95% of the agricultural output, 90% of industrial output and almost all construction and trade sectors (Wahba 1994). With the July 1961 decrees, the state took full control of Egypt's economic resources and became the major force in the economy. "By the beginning of 1962 all banks, all heavy industry, insurance and the key economic enterprises were state-owned, and all medium-sized economic units had to accept a 51 percent state participation in their capital ownership and therefore in their administration" (Abdel-Malek, 1968, p. xv). In August 1963, the regime nationalized more than 228 companies in industry, transport and mines, followed by 177 companies in the same year (Abdel-Malek, 1968, p. xvi). By the end of the Sixties, the foundation of the welfare state was laid and "a system of etatism in the full sense of the word was applied in Egypt" (Wahba 1994; El-Ghonemy 2003, p.74). The period of Nasser was characterized by unprecedented emphasis on egalitarianism, guaranteed employment and the control of a powerful state over the economy (El-Ghonemy 2003, p.74). The new formula of welfarist legitimacy was too powerful to be easily forgotten in the future, as will be shown throughout this thesis.

At the heart of Egypt's etatism was industrialization. Egypt followed, like most third world countries after the great depression in 1929, import-substituting industrialization (ISI). The *first* phase of ISI in Egypt included the introduction of protective tariffs after the great depression. This period witnessed a minor role of the state in the economy (Waterbury 1992, pp.10–11). Three major reasons prevented the success of ISI before Nasser assumed power in Egypt (Farah 2009, pp.30–31). The landowners were too powerful for the state to impose land reform, and hence increase savings and investment in industrialization. Secondly, the landowners were stronger than the emerging industrial elites as the industrial elites "came from the ranks of the landowning elite" (Farah 2009, p.31). Thirdly, the presence of the British occupation prevented both the state and the elites from protection of the Egyptian infant industries. The *second* phase of ISI started with the Nasser regime. It was a state-led ISI (Waterbury 1992, p.10). This was the period of 'deepening' the ISI mode of accumulation. Although it was exhausted by the mid-sixties of the 20th century, due to the increased inefficiency, low rates of investment and low labour productivity, it achieved progress in welfare programs and employment (Waterbury 1992, p.7,10), as well as the industrial infrastructure that it created and the huge national projects; i.e. the High Dam, that it established, resulting in, once again, a new benchmark of eudaemonic legitimacy.

The welfare state's achievements benefited mostly the then-new state-linked middle class and partially the peasants and workers. Only six weeks after the coup d'état, the new revolutionary

regime launched the land reform law. The agricultural reform had two reasons. First, to curb the power of the big landed aristocracy (Mabro 1974, p.56), and, secondly, to create a loyal constituency of peasants whose interests the regime could claim to promote. The state subsidized major food items including bread, and also fixed low prices for most manufactured products (Farah 2009, p.36). The state sponsored free public education programs and extended it to include all stages of education including higher education. Also, public health programs were launched and the government was committed to the provision of free healthcare for all those who cannot afford private treatment (Farah 2009, pp.35–36).

The regime placed “almost total responsibility” for the planning and the implementation of the 1952 revolution’s economic and social development programs “upon the shoulders of the Egyptian bureaucracy” (Palmer et al. 1988, p.3). The bureaucracy had three main functions: First, to maintain “an ever-increasing array of services essential to the day-to-day operation of the state”, secondly, to lead socioeconomic development of the society (Palmer et al. 1988, p.1); and, thirdly, to work as a control device (Ayubi 1996, pp.320–321). Owen (2004, p.27) argued that the management of a large bureaucratic apparatus with enormous authority endowed the regime with enormous power. In 1964, Nasser adopted a policy of guaranteed employment in the government (Shehata 2010, p.23). Thus, it was “the first time in Egypt’s recent history a government ensured that everyone seeking employment would be able to find a job” (El-Ghonemy 2003, p.77). Bureaucratic expansion, Palmer et al. (1988, p.4) notes, “was not motivated solely by the staffing requirements of the bureaucracy”. It was also meant to reduce “intellectual underemployment” among thousands of graduates emerging from the revolution’s “expanded education system” (Palmer et al. 1988, p.4). Thus, it could be stated that the Nasser regime transformed Egypt into a “bureaucratic state” (Palmer et al. 1988, p.5). It controlled almost all areas of political, economic and social life in Egypt. It swelled to meet the needs of increasing population. However, “its structure and organisation were poorly suited to the task” (Palmer et al. 1988, p.5); a fact that would have grievous consequences in the decades to follow.

Nevertheless, the state under Nasser’s welfare programs appeared to the public as the most efficient provider of social services. Destroying corruption and nepotism has always been among the very first goals of 1952 revolution (Wheelock 1960, p.12). Egyptians believed in the personal integrity of Nasser and his regime. The State took full responsibility for meeting the socioeconomic needs of Egyptians and by far exceeded its domestic competitors, be they the Islamists or the bourgeoisie. Nasser’s state was thus able to accumulate a large reservoir of eudaemonic legitimacy that continued to formulate the ‘benchmark’ of that type of legitimacy for the regimes that followed

him. Indeed, Nasser's economic policies was translated into 'standards of legitimacy' that continued to haunt the following regimes after his passing.

2.2 The power of ideology

Nationalism was the second pillar on which Nasser built the modern Egyptian state's legitimacy formula. As Hinnebusch reminds us, "Egypt's centuries of subordination to foreign rule, its long struggle for independence, and its continuing dependency on other countries generated a powerful nationalism that made national legitimacy crucial to the acceptance of the authoritarian state" (Hinnebusch 1990a). The 'national problem' was the most urging issue in Egypt before 1952. Egypt has long been subjugated to occupation and foreign rule. It is not a local myth that Nasser was the first native Egyptian to rule Egypt in a thousand years (Marsot 1985, p.107; Hinnebusch 1988, p.13; Waterbury 1992). Therefore it was inevitable that nationalism to become the core of Nasserism (Hinnebusch 1988, p.14). The Nasserite legacy, when it comes to ideological legitimacy, was nationalism and Egypt's regional hegemony on the Arab World. Nasser, "an ideologue and a politician", in the words of Dawisha (2003, p.2), managed to create a compelling image of a new Egypt that is independent and powerful. Indeed, this image captured the imagination of Egyptians and strongly inspired their feelings of national pride. It is vital here to argue that Nasser's ultimate aim was, as much as nationalist foreign policy was concerned, to serve the interests of the Egyptian state by manipulating pan-Arabism. Nasser, as Dawisha notes (2003, p.136), "was first and foremost, an Egyptian patriot".

However, the argument for the strength of Egyptian nationalism does not imply that pan-Arabism had no power in Egypt. Indeed, pan-Arabism, as ideology and movements, was not only a mere instrument of the Nasser regime, but also a domain in its own. Hinnebusch (2014, p.14) observed that "they [pan-Arab movements] used Nasser as he used them" and "pressured him into increasing Egypt's commitment to the Arab cause against his better judgment". Hinnebusch (2014, p.13; 2005, p.158) also pays attention to a vital remark, which is that the content of the Egyptian nationalism itself was Islamic and Arab, and it did not have a distinct essence separated from its 'rival' identities. This is exceptionally true as the discussion in the first chapter showed how the Egyptian identity, with its pharaonic, Mediterranean or secular versions failed to take roots in the Egyptian society and continued to be elitist and quasi-secluded.

It is thus could be argued that it is in the hybrid nature of the Egyptian identity, with its focus on Egypt-first, yet its lack of Only-Egyptian content and thus its reliance on Arab-Islamist discourse,

that the logic of the ideational perspective of the Egyptian foreign policy could be located. Therefore, I argue that the most crucial reason of the success of Nasser's foreign policy was satisfying the national pride of Egyptians by the image of the strong, hegemonic Egypt in the Middle East. This point is vital in this thesis, as it will be argued later that the main reason of the loss of ideational legitimacy under the successors of Nasser was not the pro-Western policies as much as it was the perceived decline of Egypt's status as a regional power in the Middle East.

Thus, it could be noted that Nasser's ideological legitimacy was basically based on his external 'successes', not its Arab-nationalist orientation, which, using Nasser's elements of ideological power that will be discussed later in this chapter, created the image upon which the reference point of legitimacy was constructed. McDermott described the essence of the Egyptians' national pride in precise words (1988, p.15):

“...the powers of the veiled protector, Britain, were cut back; Egypt's non-aligned position in world politics appeared paramount; and when Nasser spoke of Arab unity and the ousting of conservative Arab regimes, stained by their links with the West and colonialism, the rulers in those Arab countries trembled. Egypt was simultaneously admired, feared and hated in the region...For Egyptians, however, there was the feeling that it was at last occupying its rightful position”.

Nasser's nationalist achievements included ending the British occupation of Egypt which lasted for almost 70 years; the rejection of the Baghdad Pact and the Western policy of alliances in the Middle East; the support for the Algerian revolution against the French; the Czech-Russian arms deal in 1955 which inaugurated an end to the Western monopoly over Egypt's arming; the non-alliance movement that Nasser championed, along with Nehru of India, Tito of Yugoslavia, Chou En-lai of China, Sukarno of Indonesia and others from the first generation of post-colonial leaders in Asia and Africa; the failure of the tripartite aggression in Suez 1956 was perceived by most Egyptians at the time as a sweeping victory for Nasser against two international powers (UK and France) and one regional power (Israel); and the unity with Syria, under Nasser's leadership, which inspired millions of Egyptians and Arabs alike with dreams of a renewed Arab/Islamic empire (McDermott 1988, p.23). Indeed, Nasser became the nation's hero as his successful defiance of the West, until 1967, enflamed the imagination of Egyptians and Arabs (Wheelock 1960, p.57; Ali 2013).

Nasser's successes in foreign policy could not be understood apart from his personal charisma that was an important component of his ideological legitimacy. It has been stated in the first chapter that charisma, which has often been argued to be the base of Nasser's legitimacy, is a

function of the ideological power of the regime. An independent charisma of a political leader with no surrounding ideological context is inconceivable. Nasser's charisma is inseparable from the ideology that he embodied. It is undeniable that Nasser had personal qualities that helped, in a mutually dependent process, strengthening and spreading his discourse and political, even social, ideas. However, without the wider context of ideas and the early successes of his foreign policies, it was unlikely that he would have been perceived as the charismatic leader he was. Thus it is more precise to argue that Nasser's power was derived from his ideology and nationalist policies more than his personal charisma.

In this context, it is safe to note that Nasser was the right man in the right time (Hinnebusch 1988; Vatikiotis 1978, p.153). He spoke the language of common Egyptians, looked like them and was indeed a perfect representative of the emerging social classes, particularly youth, in the Egyptian society. He was "perceived by ordinary Egyptians as being one of them, and this was fundamental to the emotional support which he received" (McDermott 1988, p.23). In Mohamed Hassanein Heykal⁶'s words to McDermott (1988, p.29): "As a historical personality he [Nasser] was able, even without it being his intention, but through his direct contact with the people, to bypass all institutions and go direct to the people. That was his charm, his appeal and his charisma". Vatikiotis noted another component of Nasser's popularity, which was his language. Speaking in slang Egyptian and frequent communication with the people were, he noticed, essential to his legitimacy (Vatikiotis 1978, p.154). He delivered his speeches in "medial" or "colloquial language" and punctuated them by "folksy humour" (Podeh & Winckler 2004, p.16). Nasser, who glorified the values and way of life of the 'common man', and by addressing the masses in their own language, succeeded indeed in "creating the image of 'one of us'"⁷ (Podeh & Winckler 2004, p.16). Dawisha (2003, p.149) notes that Nasser was a "dazzling public speaker who mesmerized his listeners and kept them in rapt attention throughout the duration of his usually long speeches.... [he also] had a knack for creativity manipulating the Arabic language, a linguistic medium ideally suited for arousing emotions, to produce the desired response from his audience."

Podeh & Wincler (2004, pp.16–17) point out the impact of Nasser's personal charisma on strengthening his ideology and boosting his legitimacy:

"In the past, the common people were not accustomed to meeting the king 'face to face' and hearing him in their own language. Nasser's messages promised to solve

⁶ A leading Egyptian journalist, who has been Nasser's close friend and advisor.

⁷ It was not unexpected that more than forty years after Nasser's death, a Presidential candidate in the Presidential elections in 2012, uses "one of us" as the main slogan of his campaign. This candidate was Hamdeen Sabahi, a self-declared Nasserist politician.

the political and social crisis, or they were interpreted as such. In order to attract all social classes, these messages were broadly and simply phrased, encapsulated in slogans such as ‘anti-Zionism,’ and ‘pan-Arabism.’” By emphasizing the issue of ‘restoring national dignity’ in his discourse, Nasser made a psychological appeal to the emotions of Egyptians and Arabs from all walks of life”

Nasser’s ideology and charisma were supported by a strong ideological apparatus and an influential cultural wave that had its inspiration from the man and his daring challenge to the great powers of his time. Nasser’s personal love of reading and writing⁸ and his genuine appreciation for arts created a unique rapport between him and the Egyptian intellectuals of his time. Nasser was indeed the right man to appreciate the importance of propaganda machines in spreading the legitimising ideology of the state. Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, played a major role in mobilising and orchestrating that apparatus through his position as the editor-in-chief of the most popular daily newspaper Al-Ahram. Heikal was considered by some to be the true founder of Nasserism, in the sense that he forged its discourse. Along with Cairo’s cultural hegemony over the Arab region, it was possible for nationalism in the Nasserite sense to transform itself into the benchmark of ideational legitimacy not only in Egypt but also in many other Arab states. Dawisha described the impact of Egyptian culture on the region, stating that “nothing that the other Arabs would produce in plays, soap opera, comedic programs, and the arts could even remotely match the sophistication of Egyptian programming. In music.... Cairo was supreme, its concerts unrivalled, its artists legendary. At various times, these artists rendered songs in praise of Nassir and his ideological message. Umm Kulthum [the legendry most famous Egyptian singers] was particularly close to Nassir, and sang no less than 31 ‘patriotic’ songs, a number of them extolling Nasir himself” (Dawisha 2003, pp.148–149).

Finally, Nasser supplemented his ideological legitimacy by other traditional sources, namely religion. Although Egyptians consider Nasser’s era as a triumph of secularism, which is true to a great extent compared to post-Nasser times, it is equally true that Nasser employed Islam as a source of political legitimacy (Farah 2009, p.111). Nasser laid the foundation of official ‘moderate’ Islam in contrast to political Islam that was the doctrine of the MB, the main foe of the post-colonial state in Egypt. Nasser and the MB went through a devastating struggle in the very few years that followed the 1952 revolution. It could be safely noted that this struggle was not only a struggle for power and authority, but also a struggle for the right to represent Islam as a source of legitimacy. Although

⁸ He, like Sadat afterwards, had several attempts of writing poetry and diaries.

Nasser cracked down the MB after they attempted to assassinate him in 1954, he was keen on convincing the people that the MB does not represent ‘true’ Islam and that they are extremists (YouTube 2012b).

For that purpose, the state under Nasser adopted an official version of Islam as a major component of its official ideology and enlarged the role of Al-Azhar as the state’s official religious institution. The state issued law 103/1961, known as the Azhar Law, which defined the role of Al-Azhar as follows (Abdel Zaher 2014, pp.9–10):

“The Azhar is the grand Islamic scientific authority, which is responsible for saving, studying and spreading the Islamic heritage and conveying the Islamic message to all peoples, and working on showing the reality of Islam and its impact on the progress of humanity and its civilization”

Thus, Al-Azhar and the official religious institutions and sheikhs have consistently granted religious legitimacy to the state’s policies no matter how contradictory they were at times. Al-Azhar, for example, participated in formulating and promoting the ‘socialist’ ideology of the Nasser regime (Younis 2011, pp.557–562). It also religiously legitimised the subsequent transformation to capitalism and the peace with Israel (Cook 2012, p.151; Abdel Zaher 2014, p.10).

2.3 Why democracy did not matter?

Egypt’s most urging challenges, post 1952, did not include democratic transition. Although ‘achieving right democratic life’ was one of the 1952 revolution’s goals, Nasser made it clear from the beginning that ‘social democracy’, where interventions are done by the state to achieve social justice, is to precede political liberal democracy where parties compete for power. Attacking the pre-1952 liberal democratic experience is a recurring theme in Egypt’s rulers since Nasser. Nasser, indeed, was the first to assert that liberal democracy, at the time of the so-called liberal era (1923-1952), was a mere tool in the hands of the corrupt elite, local and foreign, to rotate power among themselves and it caused nothing but instability and weakness of the country. Nasser, who managed to enjoy high levels of eudemonic and ideological legitimacy as discussed earlier in this chapter, was not forced to claim democratic legitimacy. He declared openly, in an interview with the New York Times in 1954, that “Egypt needs social and economic strengthening by authoritarian methods and political purge.... before [a] democratic constitution” (Wheelock 1960, p.36). Therefore, Nasser’s authoritarianism was not to be conceived as a violation to his overall legitimacy, for, as it

was argued in the first chapter, what really matters when it comes to assessing the legitimacy of a ruling regime is the claims that the regime itself makes about itself, and the level of public acceptance to these claims.

However, while it is true that Nasser's state did not rely on democracy as a source of legitimacy, it is equally true that it had other institutional sources that supported his main mode of eudemonic/ideological legitimacy. Institutional legitimacy, as has been discussed in the first chapter, is concerned with the role of the authority members, the method by which they reached power, and how they exercise power. In other words, it is created as an outcome of how 'institutionalised' are the institutions and the processes of obtaining and exercising power. As Hinnebusch reminds us, "although the contemporary Egyptian state remained in essence authoritarian, such rule was not accepted unconditionally. Its legitimacy depended on adherence to certain public expectations" (Hinnebusch 1990a). The authoritarian tradition in Egypt indeed has historical roots. "Egypt has been governed by powerful centralized rule since ancient times, when the management of irrigated agriculture gave rise to the pharaohs, absolute god-kings. This experience produced a propensity toward authoritarian government that persisted into modern times" (Hinnebusch 1990a). Nasser embodied this centralisation and institutionalised it in the Presidency. The institution of Presidency, under Nasser, became the epitome and ultimate embodiment of political power in Egypt. Nasser managed to routinise his own personal charisma in the presidency, hence granting it his 'super-powers' as perceived by Egyptians.

The new ruling elite in Egypt under Nasser was mainly concerned with 'discipline' as a direct response to the political chaos that engulfed Egypt before 1952. After a few attempts to reconcile with the traditional political forces; the Wafd Party and the MB, the free officers were soon disillusioned and decided rather to impose their own version of discipline and union lest the political chaos continues and their dreams of modernising Egypt fade away. Nasser successfully appealed to the societal yearning for order and was daring enough to confront the people with his diagnosis of the problem and his suggested prescription. He wrote in the 'Philosophy of the Revolution' describing his disappointment in the political life of the elites and society (McDermott 1988, p.2):

"The masses did come. But how different is fiction from facts!

The masses did come. But they came struggling in scattered groups. The Holy March to the Great Goal was halted, and the picture in those days looked dark, dastardly and foreboding.

It was only then that I realized, with an embittered heart torn with grief, that the

vanguard's mission did not end at that hour, but it had just begun.
We were in need of discipline, but found nothing but anarchy.
We were in need of unity, but found nothing but anarchy.
We were in need of work, but found nothing but indolence and inactivity.
Hence the Motto of the Revolution—Discipline, Unity and Work.”

By the end of 1954, Nasser has won his political battles against almost all competing rivals and transformed himself from a “*primus inter pares*” (a first among equals) in the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) into “its unchallenged chief” (Vatikiotis 1978, p.137). He filled in the ensuing political vacuum by a combination of different means that included the state's single party in its different versions from the Liberation Rally to the Arab Socialist Union. Hudson (2015) outlined the process whereby the actors behind the revolutionary, pro-republic coups in the 1950s and 60s in the Middle East attempted to assert their legitimacy. The middle-class intelligentsia and Arab nationalist army officers who drove the revolutions, replaced their vanguardist ruling committees (often named the ‘Revolutionary Command Council’) with a single-party system of government and ruling structure. Such changes might have had the appearance of moves towards democracy, in the form of parliaments and elections, but this was widely acknowledged as a façade. The large ruling party structure took its place among the various other large edifices of officialdom, with the public expected to conform to its workings and overarching presence unquestioningly (Hudson 2015, p.31).

Thus, at the top of the political institutions was the Presidency of the Republic ‘*Ri’aset el-Gomhoryya*’ as the supreme arbiter of the political system and the major source of its deficient institutional legitimacy. The role of the Presidency and the President was a major characteristic in the modern Arab state's model. Luciani (1990, p.xxvii) noted that, it is on the top of the Arab state's characteristics, the most important feature of the stable Arab states in the 1970s and 1980s is “the position of a central strong man, leader and orchestrator....[t]he Great Patron or Manipulator...”. This is even more correct when it comes to Nasser, who could be argued to be the ‘Great’ founder of this very model of the Arab state. Indeed, “the extensive constitutional rights given to the presidency in Egypt render the balance of power between the executive, legislature and judiciary extremely uneven. In fact, these all-encompassing constitutional rights enable the presidency to remain “the most dominant force in contemporary Egypt”” (Abdulgaki 2008, p.123). This facet could be argued to be one of the most important pillars of the State's institutional legitimacy, which, if lost, could jeopardize the regime's legitimacy, as will be shown in next chapters.

The other major component of Nasser's institutional legitimacy, arguably, until the 1967 War, was the perceived prestige of the Army as the force behind the July 1952 revolution and the engine of Egypt's modernisation project. As Stacher puts it, "due to its crucial role in throwing the royal family in 1952, and it attaining actual independence for Egypt in 1954, the military held "a special place in Egypt's collective nationalist imagination" (Stacher 2007, p.72). Stacher (2007, p.72) adds that "the Free Officers leadership, headed by Nasser, was perceived as the modernizing answer to Egypt's development challenges in the revolution's aftermath. Nasser's use of pan-Arabism, which was not as key for unifying the population in Egypt as in Syria, placed the Egyptian military at the forefront of defending the Arab world. The political legitimacy windfall of Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal and withstanding the British, French, and Israeli tripartite aggression in 1956 gave him and the military leadership free rein to govern politically".

2.4. Conclusion

Nasser not only founded the contemporary Egyptian state but he has also established the benchmarks of legitimacy for the rulers to follow. Nasser's legacy included eudaemonic legitimacy represented in the welfare state that he built, ideological legitimacy, which manifest in Egypt's Arab nationalist policies and its growing role in regional and international politics. The importance of these two specific types of legitimacy was a product of the socioeconomic structure enshrined in Egypt. While the legacy of underdevelopment made rapid modernisation a priority, the legacy of foreign occupation made national independence another priority. Nasser responded to these two challenges with the 'right' tone, causing his legitimacy not only to rise but to extend beyond the legitimacy of his regime and become the reference of legitimacy for the state itself. Examples that demonstrated this level of legitimacy are numerous. It is perhaps sufficient to refer to the millions of Egyptian who took to the streets refusing Nasser's resignation after the *Naksa* (defeat of Egypt in 1967 War). At the time, Nasser was a defeated leader who not only lost the military war with Israel, but also the war of dignity, that he early championed. However, it was blatantly obvious that, at least, a critical mass of Egyptians, considered him and his ideals, to still have the right to rule. After Nasser death, Sinai was still under Israeli occupation. Yet, the death of Nasser at the time was a story that Egyptians would talk about for long time to come. Again, millions of Egyptians participated in Nasser's funeral and the sea of griever appeared endless. There are many other examples indeed of Nasser's legitimacy in the eyes of vast segments of Egyptians, but these two examples are significant because they took place at a time when Nasser's legitimacy would have been expected to be at its least.

Chapter Three

Transformation for Adaptation (1967-1981)

3.1 The Crisis of legitimacy

Two major factors in the sixties of the 20th century caused substantial change in the Egyptian state formation: the 1967 war with drastic outcomes on the Egypt and the Arab world, and the economic crisis that has been emerging since mid-sixties. Even before the 1967 War, the Egyptian economy started suffering from a decline in its developmental capacity and the state's capacity to sustain its welfare system. The second five-year plan (1960-1965) did not achieve its objectives and the whole system ran into serious difficulties. While consumption continued to rise, domestic savings and investment failed to keep pace with that rise, leading to a huge fiscal gap (Nagarajan 2013, p.24). After the 1967 war, the crisis became even deeper. The Egyptian GNP annual growth went down to -3.1% in 1967/1968 as a result of the war (Beattie 2000, p.7). The number of Egyptians working for the government reached 1.2 million in 1970, rising from 325,000 in 1952 (Beattie 2000, p.12). Economic losses approached LE11 billion (\$25 billion), according to Aziz Sedki, former Egyptian Prime Minister (Al-Naggar 2014). Between the Six Day War and the Yom Kippur War in October 1973, the Egyptian Pound was equivalent to \$2.3. Nevertheless, the country ploughed significant investment in to its armed forces. This expenditure focused on replenishing and rebuilding the armed forces. Primary economic infrastructure had been targeted by Israel, with a cost of LE169.3 million (\$389.4 million) amounting just from the destruction of seventeen significant industrial plants. Losing the Sinai territory, alongside its income from tourists, mineral extraction and oil, was a long-term and irreversible impact in some respects. With regard to Egypt's vital tourist industry, losses amounted to LE37 billion (\$84 billion). Egypt's economy also faced huge pressure due to the desired level of military expenditure, to replace the loss of 80% of the armed forces' materiel. Income from the Suez Canal had been hit badly, with approximately LE1 billion (\$2.3 billion) worth of damage to the infrastructure being caused by Israeli attacks. Income from the Suez Canal had amounted to LE95.3 million (\$219 million) in 1966, approximately 4% of Egypt's GDP, and this was lost after the closing of the canal. Furthermore, the region around the Suez Canal, its industrial capacity and civilian infrastructure, suffered significant damage during the war. In sum, these were the major

factors impacting on the Egyptian economy after the Six Day War. Nevertheless, Nasser's regime during the years 1967-1970 until the death of Nasser, sought vast funding and resources to replenish and rebuild the armed forces' arms, materiel and facilities. This was despite the need to also divert resources to keep national production consistent, to reduce reliance on imports, which would ultimately allow foreign currency reserves to be spent on the armed forces (Al-Naggar 2014). Simply put, the ability of the state to continue its welfarist programs was seriously curbed. This would endanger its main mode of legitimacy, mainly eudaemonic legitimacy.

Simultaneously, the other pillar of legitimacy; i.e. ideological legitimacy, that was manifested in Egypt's interventionist and hegemonic foreign policy, was also eroded due to the outcomes of the Six Days War in 1967. Indeed, Arab nationalism has been suffering under the pressures of reality. Pan-Arabism seemed less appealing by the latter half of the 1960s. Not only had United Arab Republic had broken down, but negotiations to reconstruct a new union of Egypt, Syria and Iraq, broke down (Barnett 1998, p.162). The 1967 War put an end to the 'Arab nationalist dream'. As far as legitimacy is concerned, the 1967 War is the most direct factor that both destroyed the legitimacy of Nasserism and opened the door for the transformation of Egypt's political, economic and even cultural orientations (Hinnebusch 2000, p.129). The results of the 1967 war between Israel and the Arab states were indeed a distinctive landmark in Middle East regional history. For Egyptians, however, it was a historical turning point. It destroyed their dreams, which were based on Nasser's promises of a "brighter, richer, stronger Egypt" and undermined their confidence in the "socialist path of development" and in the alliance with the Soviet Union as well (Beattie 2000, p.7). It was disastrous "not only for Egypt's resources but also for the legitimacy of the Nasserist regime" (Karawan 2002, p.159). Arab nationalism suffered a significant blow with this war. While the Arab World was something many Arabs continued to identify with culturally, any confidence in a long-lasting political amalgamation across various territories, in the form of pan-Arabism, had largely been undermined (Dawisha 2003, p.253).

The impact of the Six Day War became particularly obvious on Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's foreign policy, diluting his keenness on Arab nationalism. Egypt had intervened militarily in Yemen leading to deteriorating relations with Saudi Arabia, policies which were consequently substantially reversed (Doran 2006 p. 114). After the Six Day War, Nasser himself, alongside many other Arab leaders, turned away from *qawmiya* (nationalism), becoming proponents of Arab statism and *wataniya* (patriotism) (Dawisha 2003, p. 254). , As Karawan stated, "Nasser failed to make Arab nationalism the primary identity of most Egyptians despite his charisma and the political resources available to the Egyptian state" (Karawan 2002, p.167). Simply, the military

defeat in the 1967 War made it practically impossible for any ruler after Nasser to enjoy the same levels of ideological legitimacy as the cost had become unbearable to Egypt's military and financial resources. Rulers after Nasser, Sadat in particular, had to find new ways to adapt to the new realities in which they found themselves.

3.2 Sadat's Adaptation Strategies

The post-populist state in Egypt was not, as it is often assumed in the literature, void of legitimacy altogether. There has been indeed a legitimacy crisis caused by the outcomes of the 1967 war and the economic dilemma; however, Sadat laid out the foundations of a new synthesis to compensate for the lack in the state's legitimacy as formulated by Nasser. Sadat's choices were framed as reactions to the structural problems which Egypt faced after Nasser, namely the war with Israel and the economic crisis. In both these fields, and adding to them some newly introduced institutional legitimacy, Sadat attempted to set up new standards of legitimacy to justify the new political regime that he aimed to establish. However, he could not destroy the old formula of Nasser. The state strategy under Sadat then, and to a larger extent under Mubarak as will be shown in the next chapter, could be described, as "a dual strategy" (Shehata 2010, p.30). It sought to legitimise itself in the eyes of its new constituencies by new parameters of legitimacy, while attempting in the same time to meet the old legitimacy standards to keep other social constituencies contained or at least unmobilisable by the opposition. The result of this strategy was a discourse that greatly depended on the Nasserist criteria of legitimacy and, simultaneously, policies and material actions that contradict its supposedly legitimising discourse. Consequently, a gap was created between discourse and policy. This gap, which would increasingly grow under Mubarak, would be afterwards one of the main reasons of the January 2011 Uprising.

The postpopulist state's dualism was a result of the gap between the high legitimacy standards set by Nasser and the impossibility of achieving them due to Egypt's real socioeconomic situation. Unable to face the masses that the mental image of the military powerful and economically prosperous Egypt, drawn by Nasser, could not be achieved in reality, Sadat was obliged to maintain the minimum discourse and policies that would keep the populist alliance created by Nasser coherent and away from the opposition mobilisation. The only time Sadat attempted to abandon one of the major tenets of populism; i.e. relieving food subsidies in January 1977, resulted in mass protests that threatened the very existence of the regime altogether. At the same time, the need for the bourgeois cooperation, and reconciliation with the West and Israel, required—controlled—

liberalisation of the economic and political sphere. This dual strategy, which is to be a major feature of the post-populist phase, proved even more effective in dealing with the opposition, as it allowed the state to shift part of the political conflict in the society to become among the opposition factions themselves and not between the state and the opposition. This ‘divide and rule’ strategy was, and to be, major feature of the Egyptian political life until the few years before 2011.

3.2.1 From welfarism to *infatih*

As it has been discussed earlier in this chapter, the economic crisis through which Egypt went was severe and structural. Thus, Sadat led a radical transformation of the Egypt’s economic orientations (Hinnebusch 1988, p.57). Although the dominant theme of Nasser’s etatism was state-led industrialisation, the welfare commitments of the state represented “a drain of resources away from industrialization” (Wahba, 1994, p. 148). The public sector failed to become the engine of capital accumulation as it was burdened with “militarism, patronage, and populist consumption” (Hinnebusch 2000, p.129). Wahba noted that the public sector was asked to perform two contradictory roles: to become an “agent of industrialization” and a “provider of welfare” (Wahba, 1994, p. 106). The failure of this policy led the state to attempt to make the public sector more efficient, “indeed more capitalist”, which would lead to a postpopulist phase (Wahba 1994). This contradiction was linked with an even deeper contradiction: the role of the state “as agent of social stability and as an agent of economic growth” (Wahba, 1994, p. 148). It is noteworthy that Nasser himself had already taken initial measures to liberalise the economy during the years 1968-1970 (Beattie 2000, p.136). The Sadat regime was confronted with a highly unfavourable economic situation by 1974. The servicing of Egypt’s debt consumed as much as 40% of export earnings, with debt standing at \$4-\$10 billion. Economic growth was as low as 1%, with public consumption reduced by 7% over the previous ten years, largely due to the incredible amount of money invested in the armed forces. Egypt’s population was expanding quickly. Increasing the tax burden on the public was not an option, as the population was already stretched and under Nasser they had come to expect a degree of protection from the state. The middle classes had also hoped to exchange their loyalty to Sadat for an increase in living standards. Furthermore, the economic elites felt hampered by populist pandering, institutionalised corruption and wastefulness which defined the nationalised sectors of the economy (Hinnebusch 1988, p.58).

The worsening economic conditions made the prioritisation decision easier to make. Hinnebusch (1988) stated that in the context of a deteriorating economic situation, the argument that

the state socialism of Nasser's era was responsible was a strong one. Therefore, to look to the wealthy Gulf States or the US and Europe for economic assistance was logical. Consequently, Sadat initiated the *infitah*, or economic opening, at a time when Egypt's urgent economic requirements coincided with renewed US and European interest in maintaining their regional influence. As the *infitah* also incorporated a political opening and a move away from the USSR, the US in particular was happy to provide Egypt with financial investment and economic materiel. With the ongoing climb in world oil prices, Egypt was in a position to benefit from the resulting influx of money in to the region. With such optimism over the potential economic bounties for Egypt, Nasser's socialist policies receded even further in to irrelevance. Egypt's economic and industrial elites enthusiastically embraced the potential which was offered through the combined strength of the population, US and European equipment and expertise, alongside investment from the Gulf region (p.58).

At its core, *infitah* Was a set of policies aimed at addressing the challenge of capital accumulation (Waterbury 1985, p.65). It was a policy to promote economic growth through trade liberalisation and stronger ties with the global market, while reducing the amount of state intervention (Hinnebusch 1988, p.272). Sadat managed the transformation with his eyes on the process of legitimacy maintenance. First, *Infitah* was designed to benefit the new private bourgeois classes that the state sponsored. By offering the bourgeoisie the guarantee of continuous economic liberalisation and privatisation of the economy, the state gained a new base of legitimacy among this class that did not exist since before the days of Nasser. Secondly, by having the support of the bourgeoisie and more economic surpluses from his new foreign policy, Sadat aimed at keeping the old populist dimension intact as much as he could.

Sadat was able to pursue his economic transformation of Egypt supported by the "rise of the right" within the regime itself during the Nasser years as a result of the state's control of the means of production (Hinnebusch 1988). The state bourgeoisie that was created at the heart of the state had a stake in finding investment outlets for the capital it accumulated during the reign of its control of the economy (Hinnebusch 2000, p.129; Hinnebusch 1988, pp.29–31). Sadat's social coalition included two main components. One component were the industrialists, financiers, opportunists and black marketeers of the previous decade, who had made their fortunes through the nascent privatisation initiatives and Sadat's later liberalising of trade. The second component were members of the Nasserist elite, who had often corruptly exploited their positions of standing, using influence in the nationalised economy to benefit their personal business dealings. This bourgeoisie, who comprised the political elite, from traditionally wealthy families or made wealthy through the state

bureaucracy (state bourgeoisie), were happy to see the back of Nasser's socialist policies and welcomed privatisation. Thus, it was the bourgeoisie who enthusiastically pushed Sadat for the opening, then as it was implemented they rushed to exploit the opportunities and push for further measures under *infitah*. As the Egyptian economy was liberalised and privatisation measures were implemented, those who were already affluent were the ones able to best take advantage, amassing further fortune more or less to the detriment of the disadvantaged in society. Therefore, with the *infitah*, the bourgeoisie could continue with renewed vigour. Hinnebusch (1988) explained that much of the private economic elite was comprised of those who had amassed wealth prior to the 1952 revolution, or who had gained it during the 1950s and 1960s in the Gulf States. The Egyptian opening simply enabled these groups to accrue further wealth. The educated elites, who had also been more open to external social influences from the US and Europe, could also more easily exploit the opening, by working for the international businesses, or as merchants and distributors. Eventually, after the 1967 war, both interlinked sections of the bourgeoisie were putting pressure on the regime to liberalise and privatise the Egyptian economy, as both stood to gain from an influx of international investment and a reduced role of a nationalised economy (Craissati 1989, p.3; Hinnebusch 1988, pp.58–59, 280). The pressures from the bourgeoisie found the right ears as Sadat shared the very same ideas with them. Contrary to Nasser, Sadat had rightist, pro-Western orientations. He believed that only a distinct shift to in Egypt's foreign policy to the West, coupled with economic and political liberalization, could save Egypt from its socioeconomic dilemma (Beattie 2000, p.135; Marsot 1985, p.132).

Although *infitah* caused a few benefits, its negative consequences on the less privileged were drastic. On the side of benefits, three are worthy of mention (Hinnebusch 1988, p.288). One was the significant turnaround for Egypt from the post- Six Day War torpor in the economy, with much greater investment injected in to Egypt's primary industries and frameworks. A second benefit was that renewed international trade and the need for more employees led to a rise in salaries, which provided a certain improvement in the quality of life to many as a result of the economic opening. Also the utilisation of the vast international aid increase to continue the provision of government welfarism to an extent that was hoped would keep a minimum level of eudaemonic legitimacy. For example, public education was maintained and even grew under Sadat, having been introduced by Nasser. Despite the expanding numbers of higher education graduates, the regime also continued its implementation of the Guaranteed Employment Policy. The Sadat regime, in general, also extended subsidies to a greater number of products (Shehata 2010, pp.30–31). A third beneficial factor was the creation of a much more diverse economy, with international, privatised and state industries providing much needed impetus.

However, on the other side, these benefits were exclusive to those sections of society who were already wealthier. Those working for the state-owned industries would have seen less benefit to the *infitah*, given that the practical and ideological focus was on an expanding private sector. That indeed comprised millions of Egyptians. Farmers who had small holdings became worse off. Further problems created were the withdrawal of state provision of services, a lack of investment in the countryside, increasing inflation and a narrowing of work prospects. For many of the lowest paid and those in poverty, these impacts had a pronounced effect on their lives and livelihood (Hinnebusch 1988, pp.284–285). Even annual economic expansion of 4 percent for the years 1974–76 could not ameliorate the economic situation, largely due to the population expanding at a rate of 2.2 percent a year. The government faced serious problems such as the unavailability of capital infusion and the lack of cash flow which was largely the result of very expensive prices of imported products. Egypt witnessed food insufficiency, the abasement of public provision of services and inflation running at as much as 30 percent. Meanwhile, a boom in luxurious goods entering the country, as well as a blatant bourgeoisie consumerism, heightened tension (Hinnebusch 1988, p.62).

The worsening of quality of life to large segments of population led to two important implications with regard to legitimacy. First, to fill in the gap in welfare left by the state retreat, the Sadat regime allowed the MB to extend their social foundations of support throughout the 1970s, helping the movement to re-establish itself. The Brotherhood provided medical services including hospitals, constructed private mosques, became involved in transport provision in the conurbations of Alexandria and Cairo, engaged in the equitable distribution of food and other charitable acts in disadvantaged areas, founded benevolent funds, provided welfare payments, built student residences and helped individuals in to work- particularly Muslim graduates (Osman 2011, p.93). That does not comprise an exhaustive list of the services that the Brotherhood provided, largely in the absence of state provision as a consequence of the *infitah*. The contrast between the visibility of the MB and the harbingers of rolling back of the state led to a huge rise in popular support for the movement. Although the state assured stability in the immediate period in allowing the MB to fill the vacuum, the long-term undermining of confidence in the state was serious (Al-Awadi 2004).

The second implication of *infitah* was that it caused one Egypt's largest popular uprisings, namely the 1977 Bread protests, which included widespread violence, as the first significant protests following the revolution of 1952. After Sadat attempted to relieve the state subsidies for some 'strategic commodities' such as flour, rice and subsidised goods, mass protests erupted all-over Egypt. The rioting commenced as unrest among Cairean students, alongside members of the working classes in Helwan. They rapidly swept Alexandria, capturing the discontent in the destitute

areas and regional cities. The death toll stood at 79 protestors, with a further 1500 jailed and 800-1000 casualties. The event marked the first time in a generation that the state mobilised the army to back up the police. Leftist groups attempted to exploit the unrest to form an anti-Capitalist opposition to Sadat's unravelling of Nasserist socialism. The Islamist movement, which regarded the West as a culture of moral depravity and was therefore against the West's perceived expanding cultural influence, set fire to discos and ransacked up-market shops (Hinnebusch 1988, p.71). The outcomes of the Bread Riots were numerous. The tremor of popular unrest discouraged further liberalisation and privatisation, leading the government to back down on cuts to subsidies and the increase in food prices which would have hit the poor. Sadat's authority was seriously undermined for the first time since 1973, which served to exacerbate his animosity to leftists, including the recently merged union of Nasserists and Communists, the National Progressive Unionist Party (NPUP), which he scapegoated as responsible for the riots. Most of his vindictive measures applied in the aftermath of the Bread Riots targeted the left. Furthermore, it was blatant that Sadat shifted further to the right in terms of his political rhetoric (Hinnebusch 1988, pp.71–72). The 'bread riots' was a direct manifestation of the difficulty of deviating from the eudaemonic legitimacy formula that Nasser created.

3.2.2 Egypt-First

The second most vital pillar of the state's legitimacy that Sadat found himself obliged to deal with was the ideological legitimacy. After the 1967 war and the sweeping defeat of the Egyptian army, along with the Syrian army, from Israel, Egypt was no longer able to continue Nasser's aggressive foreign policy. Its ailing economy as well made this sort of foreign policy rather costly and inconceivable. As Dawisha (2003, p.263) pointed out, "the next assertion of primacy of statist *wataniya* came from Egypt, the very country which had, during the 1950s and 1960s, presented itself and had been seen by others as the heart of *qawmiya*, the very core of Arab nationalism". Sadat decided to revive the Egyptian nationalist sentiments to offset the Arab nationalist attachment. It could be observed that two lines were followed in order to build this type of legitimacy. First, a new nationalist legitimacy based on the military 'Victory of October', as the anti-thesis of the 'failure' of Nasser's state in 1967, was established. The 1973 war between Egypt, Syria and Israel, in which Egypt showed a considerably better military performance, was hugely invested in by the Egyptian state as a source of the legitimacy of the new victorious Egypt. The 'miracle of crossing' (of the Suez canal by the Egyptian army in the 1973 war), '*mo'gezet al-'oubour*' was exploited by the state's

ideological apparatuses and intelligentsia to reinforce Egyptian Nationalism (Egypt-First), building on the deep sense of unique Egyptian identity versus the 'inferior' Arab identity, as Sadat once said in a speech before the Egyptian parliament (Youtube 2009). Thus, Egypt became Sadat's single-minded concern, laying the ground for his two critical decisions: the October 1973 War, and his trip to Jerusalem in 1977 and the consequent peace treaty with Israel" (Dawisha 2003, p.265).

Secondly, based also on the results of the October war, a vehement process of defaming Arabism and Nasserism in general was launched. Sadat stressed different components of the Egyptian identity. As Sadat designed the 1973 war not to liberate the whole of the Sinai or retrieve all occupied Arab territories but rather to force the Americans and the Israelis to make concessions, it could be safely argued that "he planned for a limited victory that would generate for him enough legitimacy at home to sell an honourable peace to the public" (Doran 2006, p.115). Instead of Arabism and secularism, the two ideological components promoted by Nasser, Sadat emphasized Egyptianism as the state's official ideology and allowed Islamism to fill in the ideological vacuum in the street. From 1974, a 'de-Nasserisation' initiative, premised by a national discussion on Nasser's legacy and the direction of Egypt's development, began. Nasser's legacy came under increasing criticism, although Sadat claimed to straddle both sides of the discussion. While open to the desire of some to abandon Nasserism, Sadat also argued he was preserving the revolutionary ambition of the Nasserist era. The reality was that the political right was effectively being encouraged by Sadat to wholeheartedly denounce Nasser's legacy, to push for a reorientation of Egypt's foreign, economic and social policy. Attacks on Nasser denounced him for increasing nepotism over meritocracy, increasing the burden of government administration on entrepreneurship, destroying Egypt's economic strength through unnecessary wars and implementing socialism, as well as exchanging British colonialism for subjection by Israel (Hinnebusch, 1988, p. 61).

The media had a crucial role in affecting legitimacy. Indeed, the mass media was central to legitimising regime policies, as well as influencing public perception of such policies. Much of the relationship and information flow between the public and the government is influenced by mass communication. Media is a tool which can be adopted for propaganda purposes, to portray particular government actions favourably, mobilise societal support for foreign policy ambitions through emotional appeal to common principles, as well as undercutting any criticism. The Sadat regime utilised its domination over the means of mass communication for these ends, to methodically mould the Egyptian public's collective perceptions. The state media was used to emphasise Egypt's stature and standing, on both the world and home stage. The regime introduced changes to the education

system, to stress the embeddedness of Egyptian civilisation and culture, its history and exceptionalism. Sadat's regime blamed the on-going conflict between Israel and the Arab World for Egypt's financial woes, to deflect criticism (Karawan, 2002, p. 164). It was a process of not only de-Nasserization, but de-legitimisation of the Nasser's ideological legitimacy at large. It was argued that Arab Nationalism and Nasserism led Egypt to defeat and loss; that no Arab country really supported Egypt and it was left alone to fight its own war with Israel. It was argued that Egypt had no problem of its own with Israel and the Palestinian cause should be de-Egyptianized; and that Egypt had sacrificed more than any other Arab country for the Arab causes with no or little reward for Egypt and the Egyptians and that it was the time now to end this drain of Egyptian human and financial resources (Karawan 2002, pp.162–163). Thus, giving the inherent strength of this feeling of Egyptianism, it was hardly surprising that Sadat could roll Nasser's foreign policy back.

The significant break from Nasser's Arab Nationalism was, indeed, Sadat's 1977 visit to Israel, where he sought an end to hostilities, alongside the consequent Camp David Accords in 1978. This marked Egypt's departure as leader of the Arab states, while destroying any remaining prospects for pan-Arabism. The Baathist regime in Iraq moved rapidly to take on the role of leading the Arab World, calling for an embargo on Egypt as a punitive measure. Almost all Arab states engaged in this embargo and ended diplomatic ties. Egypt also lost the Arab League Headquarters to Tunisia (Doran, 2006, p.116). Sadat's separate peace with Israel revealed the strength of Egyptian nationalism as a vital component of the Egyptian identity. Arguably, it would have been quite difficult for other Arab leaders who preside over Arab states that are less secured in their identities as a nation state to perform the same act as Sadat did. As many scholars observed, there was general support among Egyptians to Sadat's Egypt-First orientation, including the peace with Israel. Egyptians wanted to end the "state of belligerency with Israel and redirecting the government's energies to the immense challenges on the home front" (Dawisha 2003, p.268).

In that context it could be understood why Sadat's trip to Jerusalem gave, in Hinnebusch's view, "a sudden major boost to his sagging popularity and authority" (Hinnebusch 1988, p.72). Indeed, the Jerusalem visit witnessed no popular rejection which could imply some sort of consent. It is noteworthy that Sadat decided to visit Israel in the same year in which the Food Riots took place. Feeling threatened and short on legitimacy, he decided to take a radical, risky initiative. A large swathe of the population favoured the visit and move towards peace, even if they held personal misgivings about its likely success. The approval was such that many Egyptians demonstrated in support of Sadat. The religious establishment of Al-Azhar expressed approval, as did the armed forces through Minister of Defence Gamasi. Hinnebusch also showed the extent of popular support,

in that certain members of the National Progressive Unionist Party (NPUP) indicated approval for Sadat's visit, in defiance of the party chiefs. Sadat's popularity in the wake of the visit was only improved by the condemnation he received from other Arab states, given that it buoyed the popular feeling that Egypt's priorities came first. Many Egyptians believed that other wealthy Arab states were merely exploitative in nature, desiring that Egypt contest their battles for them (Hinnebusch, 1988, p. 72). What could be noted is that a divide emerged between the elite and significant segments of the society. While most of the society, as has been shown, supported Sadat's new foreign policy, or at least refrained from rejecting it, "there was a break in the consensus at the political elite itself" (Hinnebusch 1988, p.72).

On another level, political Islam also was on the rise. Indeed, the rise of political Islam coincided with the demise of Arab Nationalism after the Six Day War (Karawan 2002, p.159). Those individuals, disillusioned with secular Arab Nationalism in some instances, sought to reconnect to a romanticised bygone age, of a more Islamic-influenced Egypt free from nefarious external influences (Dawisha 2003, p.278). The Sadat regime sought also, in its pursuit of de-Nasserisation, to fill the 'Egypt-First' identity with Islamic content. Sadat's 1980 constitutional amendments stipulated the 'principles of Islamic Sharia' as 'the' prime source of legislation. In return for that, Islamists did not oppose to open the number of Presidential terms to be more than once instead of only two terms as it was the case in the 1971 constitution. Sadat initiated his own Islamisation policy to seek favour by political Islamists, however it was met with aggressive resistance from various quarters of the Islamist movements (Telhami & Barnett 2002, p.12). Sadat hoped to use political Islamists to deflect criticism from Arab Nationalists and Nasserists. However, peace with Israel was anathema to significant parts of the Islamist movement, including the MB (Osman 2011, p.99). Sadat had a two-pronged approach, hoping to restrain the Islamist movement while exploiting it to undermine his Arab Nationalist opponents. Nevertheless, by the end of the 1970s, the Islamist movement became increasingly ideologically opposed to Sadat's regime (Hinnebusch 2005, p.156). There were significant social developments, with growing sympathy for political Islam across large swathes of the middle class, originally secular in persuasion. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the welfare state was being eroded by the post-1967 economic situation and by the new liberal economic policies (*infitah*). These changes undermined a significant pillar of regime support, assisting the Islamist movement to fill in the gap. Political Islam also took up the mantle of directing Arab nationalist projects as the natural heir to defend the '*Umma*'. In some respects this led to political Islam and Arab Nationalism being in positive symbiosis at times, rather than one undermining the other (Hinnebusch 2005 p.156). A trend that would have significant

effects in the years to follow paving the road to reach the January 2011 uprising as will be discussed in later chapters.

After concluding the Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel of 1979, both Arab Nationalists and the Islamist movement considered the agreement as an embarrassment to Egypt, tantamount to surrender and a callous disregard of the Egyptians who had fought and died in the war against Israel. While many Egyptians did applaud the peace efforts, in intellectual circles the peace treaty and Sadat were roundly condemned, having a significant influence on popular perceptions. Nizar Qabbani, arguably the most popular poet in the Arab sphere in the past fifty years, wrote of the demise of Egypt under Sadat after the glory of Nasser's era. The renowned Egyptian poet and satirist Ahmed Fouad Negm, also famously attacked Sadat in a poem (Osman 2011, pp.98–99). It was obvious that Sadat's new ideological formula of legitimacy is less powerful than Nasser's Pan-Arabism, and that it deeply divided the society and created an influential segment in the intelligentsia that considered Sadat to be illegitimate leader or does not have the right to rule.

3.2.3 Bringing democracy back in?

Having lost its financial resources and strong ideological legitimacy, the state had a few options to enhance its overall legitimacy. On the top of the alternatives to ideology, was institutional legitimacy. As discussed, during the process of de-Nasserization, critics focused on the authoritarian aspects of the Nasserite ideology. In capturing popular discontent across all sections of the Egyptian society, anti-Nasserists emphasised the corruption of the judiciary, undermining of private ownership, human rights violations and the general erosion of civil and political liberty (Hinnebusch 1988, p.61). In his first years of rule, Sadat declared that Egypt has become *Dawlet al-Qanoun wal-mo'assasat* (State of Law and Institutions). By focusing on democratisation, rule of institutions, and sovereignty of law, Sadat aimed at building a different institutional legitimacy on the expense of the highly personalized system that Nasser championed (Al-Awadi 2004, p.54; Vatikiotis 1991, p.424). Sadat nevertheless pursued this policy in a dual manner. While leaving in place most of the authoritarian structures and means of control created by the state under Nasser, he allowed, even nurtured, the birth and partial growth of new pluralistic political structures alongside the old ones (Shehata 2010, pp.24–25). The second half of the 1970s witnessed the restoration of opposition parties and issuing the law of political parties 40/1977. There has also been greater freedom to the media and civil society (Shehata 2010, p.25). In 1976 the regime freed those Muslim Brotherhood members imprisoned during the Nasser era, while leaders were allowed back in to the country as

part of allowing the MB to perform as a non-official political party. This was in the context of a general opening up of politics to new and previously proscribed parties (Shehata 2010, p.26).

However, the state maintained its firm grip on the administration of the political process at the source through a number of measures that included the establishment of the Political Parties Committee (PPC) which had overwhelming powers over political parties including the right to approve/disapprove their establishment and the right to dissolve them. The ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) was also able to rely heavily on the state's resources to ensure its control over elected national and local councils. Furthermore, the 1971 constitution continued to place real authority within the executive branch and in particular in the hands of the President himself (Shehata 2010, p.26). The same duality existed with the revived MB as well. Although it has been allowed an active existence in the society, the state rejected the MB any form of legal legitimacy. The legal ban imposed in 1954 against the MB was not revoked and they were not allowed to register as a political party nor were they allowed to register as a religious association (Shehata 2010, p.26). Furthermore, the regime issued the 1977 Shame Law to proscribe activities which endangered Egyptian societal principles, enshrined within traditional kinship ethics. Activities which were counter to religious values were also circumscribed and punishable by the state (Osman 2011, pp.90–91). The Sadat regime was able to exploit its opponents' longstanding inter-group rivalries, especially those existing between Islamist and Secular groups, to maintain its stability. The opposition was at odds ideologically, had different degrees of support within the population, as well as diverse levels of suspicion of both the regime and each other (Shehata 2010, p.16).

3.3 Conclusion

The state's legitimacy that Nasser has established during the years 1952 till 1967 lost its most vital pillars, as a result of many factors. On top of these factors were the outcome of the 1967 War and the emerging economic crisis that has been engulfing Egypt since the mid-sixties of the 20th century. Having lost crucial components of its legitimacy, the state under its new president, Sadat, tried to make for the shortage in its eroding eudaemonic and ideological legitimacy by the third component of legitimacy, namely institutional legitimacy. Simultaneously, Sadat could not afford to not make a claim to eudaemonic and ideological legitimacy. The Sadat regime, facing a growing economic crisis, had to start the liberalisation of the economy, or the *infitah* (the economic opening), claiming that in such a way the state would be better able to achieve economic development. Along with that he attempted to substitute lost Arab-nationalist legitimacy with other ideologies, namely Egyptianism and Islamism, making the claim that through this way Egypt is more in harmony with

its 'truly' Egyptian roots and better able to protect its 'Egypt-first' interests. The impacts of Sadat's new legitimacy formula could be seen in his funeral. Compared to Nasser's funeral, which witnessed the participation of massive numbers of Egyptians, Sadat's funeral was strikingly empty from people. The lack of popular grief was obvious. While it is probably true that Sadat started his rule with a huge boost to legitimacy from the 1973 war, the transformation of economic orientation from a statist economy to a liberal one, and the failure of to get the right kind of peace, that would be perceived by people as a peace with dignity and honour, appears to have undermined his legitimacy. Also, Sadat's increased intolerance of criticism in the later years with growing arrests, undermined what credit he might have got for political opening (institutional legitimacy). So legitimacy might be described as a bell shaped curve—up at first then down toward the end of the decade.

Chapter Four

Mubarak's Legacy I

Institutional Legitimacy First

Mohamed Hosni Mubarak ruled Egypt for almost thirty years; the longest in Egypt's modern History since Mohamed Ali. This chapter attempts to explain, legitimacy wise, how Mubarak was able to rule Egypt for such a long time. The literature on Egyptian politics often emphasises that the Mubarak regime lacked legitimacy. This chapter argues that, contrary to dominant perspectives, Mubarak established a form of legitimacy that sufficed to maintain his thirty-years rule, the majority of which were without significant disturbances or challenges. This chapter highlights this under-researched aspect of Mubarak's legitimacy until the advent of the neoliberal phase under Gamal Mubarak, the President's son. It will start with institutional legitimacy as it is argued that it was the basic source of legitimacy that made it possible for the Mubarak regime to survive for three decades. The fifth chapter will then focus in-depth on the last few years of Mubarak's rule, analysing how his regime's legitimacy eroded leading to the January 2011 uprising.

4.1 The semi-open society

Building an institutional form of legitimacy was the most salient aspect of Mubarak's overall legitimacy equation (Hinnebusch 1990b, p.196). The focus on the institutional source as a main theme of legitimacy had been inherited by Mubarak from Sadat, which had been sealed by the smooth transfer of power between them, reflecting the institutionalisation of "unchallenged legal legitimacy in the office [of the presidency]" (Hinnebusch 1990b, p.196). Indeed, the way by which Mubarak assumed power was a lucid demonstration of a stable intra-elite's code of power transition. As happened with Sadat, there was no disputes among elites on the 'right' of the Vice President to be nominated to the vacant position of the President. The Egyptian regime, whether within the Nasser- Sadat's transition, or the Sadat-Mubarak's transition, appeared to be rested on a solid basis, as far as political succession is concerned. As this chapter and the chapters to follow will explain, the relations of intra-elite rivalry will change to the extent that the next succession in 2011 will be totally different from the two smooth transitions that preceded it.

As discussed in the preceding chapters of this research, the exhaustion of the Egyptian postcolonial state's welfarism and ideological legitimacy, after the 1967 War, left little viable alternative for Mubarak other than institutional legitimacy, without which the regime would not claim that it has the 'right to rule'. Mubarak, during the 1980s and 1990s, gained his institutional legitimacy through 'upgrading authoritarianism', as was explained by Heydemann (2007). Upgrading authoritarianism means reconfiguring authoritarian governance to accommodate and manage changing political, economic, and social conditions. In Egypt, it has led to a 'semi-open' society⁹. That arguably included enlarging the margin of political pluralism and accommodation and the margin of press and media's freedom, and emphasising the independence of the judiciary.

In consolidating his legitimacy, Mubarak was nevertheless eager to distinguish his rule from his predecessors, by claiming to be more democratic. Mubarak's focus on a democratic opening was remarkable compared to Nasser and Sadat's eras. Indeed, Egypt was not transformed to a democracy under Mubarak, and instead, comprising both democratic and authoritarian features, arguably constituted a 'hybrid regime' (Rutherford, 2008). Mubarak's technique of mixing aspects of democracy and authoritarianism was, according to one scholar, 'creative' (Abdulbaki 2008, p.122). During times of relative political stability, Mubarak portrayed himself as a reformer and introduced state-led opening and liberalisation, while reversing such processes and resorting to coercion, once the controlled opening appeared to threaten the real balance of power (Abdulbaki 2008, p.122).

Mubarak in the 1980s and 1990s could be argued to be a classical case of successful authoritarian upgrading. Politically, he contained civil society and managed the political contestation in a way that kept an obvious level of stability¹⁰. Indeed, Mubarak had used his presidential powers in a less radically reformist way than Nasser and Sadat. While his predecessors sought to transform Egypt in different ways, Mubarak aimed for stabilisation of the country after three decades of radical swings to the left and right since 1952 (Hinnebusch 1990b, p.196). He began his presidency by releasing over one thousand political prisoners, arrested by Sadat in September 1981. They were comprised of activists and intellectuals from various social and political backgrounds, as well as religious leaders, journalists, students, professional syndicate members and trade unionists (Al-Awadi 2003, pp.82–83). During the 1980s and 1990s it was evident that Mubarak had allowed limited democratisation and liberalisation. This period represented declining patrimonialism, personalism, traditionalism and a pharaonic style of rule that characterised Sadat's

⁹ The term 'semi-open society' was first used by the Egyptian columnist Gamal Abulhasan (Abulhasan 2014).

¹⁰ Heydemann (2007, p.5) lists five features of upgrading authoritarianism: Appropriating and containing civil societies; Managing political contestation; Capturing the benefits of selective economic reforms; Controlling new communications technologies; Diversifying international linkages.

era (Hinnebusch 1990b, p.196). Mubarak generally favoured a less personal, more institutional style of rule. Representative of this as one example was, for the first time since independence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs became the province of career diplomats, less subject to Presidential nepotism, unlike under Sadat and Nasser (Hinnebusch, 1990, p.196). However, the authoritarian presidency ultimately remained the lynchpin of the state.

The Mubarak regime and the discourse it employed never claimed the system to be representative of a full democracy. The regime's perspective was that it was impractical for Egypt to go, "from a non-democratic political system to a democracy overnight" (Cook 2012, p.168). The philosophical and political infrastructure must be carefully implemented first, so as not to threaten social cohesion, economic development and the political change itself, went the regime's argument on democracy (Cook 2012, p.168). Regardless, the regime insisted, through Mubarak's senior officials and ideologues that, "Egypt lives its best democratic eras ever" (El-Gallad 2007). That was meant to refer to the improvement of the democratisation's status in relation to the eras of Nasser in particular and Sadat as well. Consequently, throughout most of the 1980s Mubarak achieved the objective of cooling Egypt's political temperature down significantly. As Osman (2011) summarised it:

"A number of controversial laws that Sadat had introduced in his later years were quietly shelved; thousands of prisoners were freed; censorship of the press was relaxed...Civil associations proliferated. Professional syndicates were allowed to play an increasingly visible political role...The regime also reached out to different political forces in the country. For example, a number of parliamentary elections were conducted under a new 'list system', which allowed opposition parties to aggregate votes that otherwise would have been distributed in constituencies controlled by the NDP" (p. 181).

The opening started also to include the press and media. By enlarging the margin of press and media's freedom, and allowing the diversification of TV satellite channels, Mubarak gained more legitimacy as his regime appeared heading towards more liberty, democratisation and pluralism. The 1990s witnessed the launching of the first Egyptian satellite TV channel, while in 1998, NILESAT, was the first Egyptian satellite to orbit Earth. Indeed, the increasing freedom of media and press was a remarkable characteristic of the Mubarak's rule in comparison to his predecessors. The depth and consequences of this phenomenon will be discussed in the next two chapters, as it was the 2000s that witnessed a radical transformation in the status of media and press.

In addition to that, the most influential move by Mubarak was in politically reconciling with the MB, the strongest and most important political Islamist movement. Mubarak relied on the MB to balance the more radical Islamist movements. Throughout the first decade of his presidency (1981–90), Mubarak allowed the MB to flourish. The movement reached what was probably the peak of its presence in society since the golden age of the 1930s and 1940s (Pioppi et al. 2011, p.48). The regime tolerated the existence of the MB's organisations, allowing its Cairo headquarters to operate, as well as its charitable wing which had been suppressed in 1981 after Sadat's assassination. The Mubarak regime also secured the return of leading MB members from exile, including the late *murshid* (Supreme Guide) Mustafa Mashhur. The regime also complied with a court's ruling allowing pro-MB magazines to re-publish. Resultantly, the MB consolidated its presence within student organizations, participated in the parliamentary elections in 1984 and 1987, while winning elections in the main professional associations, such as doctors, scientists, engineers and lawyers. The MB also consolidated its social presence through the expansion of an efficient network of charities linked to private mosques (Pioppi et al. 2011, p.48). The peak of the relation with the MB was their unprecedented victory in the 2005 parliamentary elections and gaining 85 seats (20% of the voting power). This will be covered in the chapters to follow.

Simultaneously, the emphasis on the judiciary's independence was another significant pillar of the state's claim for institutional legitimacy under Mubarak. In the 1980s Mubarak launched a, "seriously organised" campaign against institutionalised corruption (Al-Awadi 2003, p.78), meant to underscore its claim to legal legitimacy. The campaign targeted high profile figures, such as Sadat's brother 'Isamat El-Sadat, who was tried in 1983 for illicit dealings. The campaign against *fasad* (corruption) was intended to show Egyptians that the Mubarak regime was industriously committed to tackling corruption, that nepotism no longer characterised the regime, as well as showing that all were equal before the law (Al-Awadi 2003, p.78).

Regardless of all the constitutional defects, the judiciary was able to exercise a promising degree of independence (Abdulbaki 2008, p.122). The state's discourse consistently emphasised the regime's unequivocal respect for equal rights, the judiciary's independence and the sovereignty of law (Al-Awadi 2003, p.77). This was not simply a discursive strategy, but had a real impact in practice. Members of the prosecuting attorney and the State Court were guaranteed full immunity and protection under law. Furthermore, the Council of the Supreme Court was presided over by an independent judge, rather than the Minister of Justice.

Mubarak also declined to use his presidential powers, at least in a blunt manner, to pressurise the courts into issuing new rulings that would curtail social and political freedoms. On the contrary,

the courts adopted a series of limited but significant legal reforms in the social and political spheres (Al-Awadi 2003, pp.77–78). Additionally, through issuing several rulings condemning some human rights violations, rejecting a number of unconstitutional legislative procedures and several electoral laws, “the Egyptian Supreme Constitutional Court not only demonstrated an exceptional degree of autonomy compared to other Egyptian state-institutions, but also proved its ability to challenge the executive authority” (Abdulbaki 2008, p.125). Resultantly, the judiciary has increasingly won the confidence of opposition groups who sought to challenge the regime. It is noteworthy that by the late 1990s, the judiciary had supported the establishment of around half of the fourteen political parties, after having had their applications rejected by the PPAC. Almost all prospective party applications had been declined by the PPAC, amounting to fifty by the year 2000 (Abdulbaki 2008, p.125). This unprecedented and relative independence of the judiciary was justifiably perceived as a positive sign of a maturing or ongoing, “democratization based on the rule of law” (Abdulbaki 2008, p.122).

In sum, it could be argued that Mubarak institutionalised the postpopulist state in Egypt and gave it a source of legitimacy that was able to maintain this state without deep social unrest. However, the two other sources of legitimacy, eudaemonic and ideological were not totally abandoned. Indeed, Mubarak during at least the first two decades of his rule worked hard to guarantee that his regime is not seriously short of these two still-important sources.

4.2 The Seeds of Neoliberalism

The crisis of the Egyptian economy continued to exist under Mubarak. Its main core was that the state’s expenditure exceeds its revenues and this entailed growth in the budget deficit and the inability of the state to finance its social protection programmes. When Mubarak took charge, the Egyptian population stood at 45.5 million, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of approximately \$40 billion (Cook 2012, p.159). Per capita annual income was slightly less than \$900. Egypt’s external debt was \$22 billion, although it peaked in 1988 at \$46 billion, before levelling off at around \$30 billion for much of the 1990s. Egypt’s population was growing rapidly, with the inability of the economy to meet the demand for jobs from hundreds of thousands of new graduates who were entering the work force annually (Cook 2012, p.159). According to government statistics, unemployment during the 1980s ranged from 5 to 7 percent, before rising steadily in the first half of the 1990s, peaking in 1995 at 11 per cent (Cook 2012, p.159). Indeed, Egypt’s economic trajectory had been problematic, given that no real solutions were introduced to the, “massive debt, significant unemployment, a growing population,” as well as an economy over-reliant on cotton

production, all contributing to the reduction in confidence of investors and international financial institutions (Cook 2012, p.159) (p.159).

Prior to 1991, Mubarak aimed to maintain the balance between the statist economy inherited from Nasser and economic liberalisation initiated by Sadat. During this period, he focused on reforming the public sector, rather than dismantling it. The public sector was seen as the linchpin of the Nasserist social contract (Al-Awadi 2003, pp.92–93). The regime also resisted pressure from donor agencies and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to introduce deeper and more rigorous economic reforms. This was a result of the lesson learnt from the Bread Riots of 1977, when cutting subsidies for food products as part of economic reform stirred public anger. The ‘Bread Riots’ of 1977 provided an instructive lesson to Mubarak, that popular discontent would likely predominate over support for economic reform, despite the eventual possibility of enduring economic stability and prosperity from the latter. Devaluation of the Egyptian currency, as well as rapid and deep privatisation, risked civil and labour unrest. The IMF and World Bank could make repeated guarantees regarding the resultant economic prosperity, yet this mattered little to Mubarak compared to his desire to maintain his regime’s stability (Cook 2012, p.160). Due to this overriding concern of Mubarak’s, he was wary of implementing any deep liberalisation agenda which might have been detrimental to people from poorer classes, hence increasing the prospects for unrest (Osman 2011, p.182).

Parallel to this, Mubarak also highlighted the state’s eudaemonic legitimacy through his emphasis on modernising the infrastructure. After the 1967 War, infrastructure in Egypt had been neglected and under-funded, hence Mubarak ploughed a significant amount of state funding in to successfully enhancing infrastructure. Accomplishments, the regime asserted, included housing projects, transport advancements such as the Cairo Metro and enhanced road networks, communication projects and the sewage system’s renovation (Al-Awadi 2003, p.129). The apparently positive infrastructural improvements enhanced the Mubarak regime’s ‘eudaemonic legitimacy’ (Al-Awadi 2004, p.94). Osman (2011) explained how infrastructure was boosted through its consumption of the vast majority of economic investments; a common joke was that Mubarak, in his breaks between opening a new tunnel and a new bridge, would open a new bridge (p.182). Such ‘grand’ accomplishments were emphasised to the national and international media in Mubarak’s interviews and statements (Al-Awadi 2004, p.94). Furthermore, Mubarak drew a line between Nasser and Sadat’s regimes and his own, on the basis of his successful infrastructural endeavours (Al-Awadi 2004, p.129).

However, the economic problem needed more serious solutions. The Egyptian economy, up to 1991, reflected the structural dependency in place since 1952. Nasser's nationalisation programme and Sadat's *infitah* only changed the form of dependency, without transforming the essence of the economy (Roccu 2013, pp.40–41). Furthermore, the decision to maintain the significant welfarist function of the state, while scaling down its developmental role, had damaging economic consequences for the state. Roccu argued that to consider the Egyptian economy after the *infitah* as a liberalised one would be unreasonable. He argued that we might talk of a shift within the statist paradigm, yet the state had relinquished only some aspects of its production and management functions, preserving its dominance within, incentive-setting, planning, coordination and distribution: "by 1990, the total capital of private companies amounted to less than 10 per cent of book value of the state sector" (Roccu 2013, pp.40–41).

Mubarak's endeavour to enhance Egypt's economic performance based on domestic sources proved insufficient in tackling the country's multiplying economic challenges. As Roccu (2013) related: "reforms in Egypt [in the 1980s] were patchy and somehow inconsistent, with phases of thorough compliance [with the demands of IFIs] alternating with periods of stasis and outright backlash" (p.43). Therefore, despite Mubarak's attempts to preserve the balance between the statist and liberal economy, a series of economic crises re-initiated the need for more deep-rooted economic reform. Furthermore, the declining oil prices from the mid-1980s resulted in hundreds of thousands of Egyptian migrant workers losing their jobs in the Gulf, alongside a significant decline in foreign direct investment and revenue from Suez Canal trade. Resultantly, "the Egyptian regime suddenly had an acute need for short-term financial help, and in 1991 was obliged to accept IMF prescriptions" (Osman 2011, p.182). The Egyptian government entered in to negotiations with the IMF, signing a stabilisation package worth SDR250 million (Roccu 2013, p.41). This signified the initial step towards a deeper engagement with the Bretton Woods institutions. Following on, Egypt signed an Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Programme (ERSAP) with the IMF and the World Bank, in May and November 1991 respectively.

Al-Awadi (2003, p.209) grasped the essence of the 1980s situation, of a confused economic approach comprising the remnants of Nasser's centralised economic planning, alongside Sadat's *infitah*. He explained that,

"lacking a long-term vision, yet concerned with its legitimacy, Mubarak was still unprepared to concede to IMF pressures... With the confidence provided by ten years in power, Mubarak felt able to make the possibly unpopular and difficult choice of privatisation"

Just prior to the 1991 economic reforms, Springborg wrote that the Egyptian economy required a miracle to save the government from bankruptcy (S. Soliman 2011). The miracle presented itself in Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, with Egypt consequent participation in the Gulf War as part of the international coalition in 1991. The United States and Arab creditors wrote off or cancelled \$20 billion of Egyptian debt, while Washington lobbied the Paris Club to write off \$10 billion of debt, owed to the various European countries, the United States, Canada, and Japan. Debt relief provided immediate positive returns for the regime. With external debt slashed by nearly 50 per cent, Egypt could borrow more money on international markets and at a lower interest rate. Cook determined that, "the combination of much needed additional cash at more favourable repayment terms eased the pressure on the Egyptian budget and helped pave the way for future economic growth" (pp. 161–162).

Facing the deteriorating economic situation of the 1980s, ERSAP had several aims. Mindful of the social unrest that economic reform risked, a primary aim was to diminish the chance of long-term deleterious effects of reform for coterie unprotected and impoverished, through social policy adjustment. A further aim was to ease inflation and re-establish macroeconomic equilibrium, through economic balancing. A third major goal was to encourage medium and long-term growth through implementing structural adjustment. This latter goal of structural, alongside economic stabilisation, were the primary focuses of the regime's initiatives. The African Development Bank Group (2000) indicated that the major policy strategy was liberalisation: introducing the market to govern resource distribution and all aspects of the economy was intended to initiate growth of a powerful private sector. Meanwhile the public sector would be transformed, with interest rates and all prices liberalised.

During the early stages of initiating the ERSAP, Mubarak was keenly aware of the need to preserve eudemonic legitimacy (Al-Awadi, 2003, p. 211). The government's continued ability to provide public services, with the avoidance of creating public panic, were two major priorities. In the initial phase of the ERSAP, the state focused on macro rather than micro reform, so as to reduce the direct impact on the daily lives of millions of Egyptians. Additionally, the privatisation programme did not progress until the mid-nineties. Moreover, the government established state-funded programmes to alleviate the negative effects of reforms on the lower classes and public sector employees. In the same line, Mubarak ultimately opted for the long game, that unrest caused by liberalising the economy would be quelled as a result of heightened economic standards of living and general improvements, as a result of reforms (Osman 2011, p.140).

While Mubarak had a cautious approach and was mindful of preserving his regime's legitimacy, the unprecedented ERSAP reforms nevertheless progressed relatively successfully. For the first time since *Infitah*, the government took privatization seriously and put up more than 300 of the largest public-sector corporations for sale" (Osman 2011, p.141). Osman dismissed the perspective that the 1990s privatisation had been a failure, a sluggish and unproductive process: "In reality, the programme was a relative success (if compared to other programmes in South America or even in East Asia)" (p.141-142). Over the course of a decade, the government sold controlling stakes in 118 companies and minority stakes in sixteen companies. Approximately 50 per cent of the profit went to the Ministry of Finance to reduce the budget deficit, while 30 per cent contributed to settling the debts of the privatised companies with local commercial banks. A further 17 per cent was allocated to finance early retirement schemes for affected employees. Osman emphasised that, "The IMF ranked the Egyptian privatization programme the fourth most successful in the world (pp. 141–142). Roccu agrees with that assessment. He confirms that, "[h]owever, if one is to look at the three broad dimensions of reform touched upon by the Washington Consensus, then it is undeniable that Egypt fared remarkably well, to the point of being repeatedly praised by both the IMF and the World Bank" (Roccu 2013, p.43). The stabilization programme, according to scholars, was, along the IMF guidelines, "remarkably successful" (International Monetary Fund 1997). This assessment was based on many factors:

"Inflation fell from an average of 19 per cent a year during the 1987–91 period to 4.6 per cent in 1997. The budget deficit was drastically reduced, from 15.3 per cent in 1991 to 1.3 per cent in 1996, 'an effort that has perhaps few international parallels in history'. As a result of changes in monetary policy, the level of dollarisation of the economy and the annual rate of liquidity growth also fell considerably under the stabilisation programme. The unification of the exchange rate led to an increase in revenues, particularly from oil and Suez canal receipts, which combined with a reduction of budgetary expenditure by 7.5 per cent and cancellation of half of the debt on the part of Paris Club countries was fundamental to deficit reduction" (Roccu 2013, p.44).

Both the international financial institutions of the IMF and World Bank, as well as the Mubarak regime, claimed that economic reform had been largely successful. Roccu (2013) noted how this could be borne out in some regard by statistical evidence. Economic growth had largely maintained its positive rise. Capital flow and trading had expanded between the EU and Egypt. Consequently, all shareholders with a concern for Egypt's economic transformation, from country donors to the IMF, were satisfied in some measure (pp. 46-47).

Throughout the 1990s, the Mubarak regime maintained its position through the formation of close ties to the business classes. The power of the economic elite expanded. Such a regime/economic elite coalition seemed to be a natural extension of *infitah* and the efforts to liberalise and privatise, while the regime put faith in the capacity of the business class to rejuvenate the eudaemonic legitimacy it had invested in. The regime had the upper hand in the balance of power between itself and the bourgeoisie. This was going to change after the year 2000 with the deepening of economic liberalisation, as will be discussed in the next chapter. In a closed-door assembly of top Egyptian business leaders, Mubarak affirmed his coalition with them in forming a new social contract to maintain the regime's legitimacy (Al-Awadi 2003, p.214). While eudaemonic legitimacy had originally rested on a form of social contract introduced during Nasser's era, Mubarak had to reorientate it to be grounded in economic reform, the economic elite and the chances for growth that reform would provide. As it will be shown in the next chapter, the confidence of the regime in the efficacy of the new contract was not justified.

4.3 Moderate Foreign Policy and Fighting Terrorism

Mubarak was fully aware of the cost of the state's new, bold and open foreign policy under Sadat, culminating in the personal price Sadat paid with his life. Reorienting Egypt's foreign policy towards the West, as well as negotiating a peace treaty with Israel and establishing diplomatic relations, both contributed to Sadat's demise in October 1981. Despite being few obvious signs that the majority of Egyptians disapproved of Sadat's pro-Western policy, it was unfeasible for Mubarak to persist with an approach which had attracted the ire of nationalist and Islamist elites and their constituencies, as well as leading to deteriorating relations with other Arab states. Nevertheless, Mubarak was in no position to ignore the determinants of the harsh reality of Egypt's fragile economic and political situation, which had originally forced the adaptations in foreign policy. As Duran (2006) explained succinctly, Mubarak's main challenge laid in resolving the contradiction between Nasser's legacy which had established nationalist legitimacy, alongside that of Sadat's, whose combination of close U.S. and Israeli connections resulted in isolation from the Arab world (p.117). This section argues that, during the period under research, Mubarak's foreign policy successfully achieved the goal of reconciling the two seemingly contradictory legacies.

In fact, Mubarak could be argued to have relied on two main factors, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s, to adapt with the decline of nationalist ideological legitimacy, the problem that existed during Sadat's rule and continued to exist under Mubarak. He, first, pursued a moderate

foreign policy which kept the balance between Nasser's nationalism and Sadat's Westernism. Secondly, he vehemently fought rising terrorism during most of the 1990s which naturally generated general sympathy with the state in its war against terrorism and granted the regime a degree of legitimacy as a patriotic regime that protects the country from lethal threats. It also mobilised the support of most of the secular intelligentsia and guaranteed their unconditional support to the regime.

4.3.1 Foreign Policy

Mubarak opted for what could be called 'the third way' in Egyptian foreign policy. While maintaining Sadat's legacy—US alliance, peace with Israel—, Mubarak succeeded in reintegrating Egypt into the Arab world. The 1980s saw the gradual cessation of the Arab boycott of Egypt, which had been initiated as a result of Egypt's separate peace with Israel. With Mubarak's assumption of power in 1981, the Egyptian press immediately ended its hostile campaigns against Arab states, particularly Libya and Syria, who were among the strongest critics of the Egypt-Israel peace accord. Mubarak's conciliatory move contrasted with the hostile discourse favoured by Sadat in defending the Camp David Treaty. Mubarak's conciliatory gesture in ending media hostility was appreciated by the Arab regimes concerned. Furthermore, such moves were welcomed by nationalist and Islamist forces inside Egypt, who were largely opposed to relations with Israel, while rejecting hostility towards Arab countries (Al-Awadi 2003, p.76). The Iran-Iraq war, which followed closely on from the 1979 Iranian Revolution, also provided an opportunity for Egypt to reassert its role as a leading Arab power. Egypt's stance during the war was instrumental in restoring Egypt's relations with the Arab Gulf states. Mubarak opted to support Iraq- incidentally the biggest Arab state to oppose Sadat's Western policy- largely on the basis of Iraq being an 'Arab country'. Indeed, this approach to regional politics "hit a chord among most Egyptians and certainly boosted the populist legitimacy of the new regime" (Al-Awadi 2003, p.76). Resultantly, in the 1980s Egypt had managed to bolster its credentials as a crucial power in the Arab Middle East, returning back in to the Arab concert. Additionally, Egypt's contribution during the 1991 Gulf war had been substantial. Mubarak's tactical manoeuvre in making Egypt the lead Arab state in the coalition against Saddam Hussein, lent legitimacy to the US and Western campaign to liberate Kuwait. However, and in spite of wide opposition to Egypt's participation in that campaign, it also helped to ideationally legitimise the regime in relation to influential circles in the business and middle classes, who supported Sadat's approach of distancing Egypt from populist policies, instead drawing closer to the West. The

economic benefits accrued by Egypt due to participation in the Gulf War were also considerable. By the end of the 1980s and in to the early 1990s, Egypt could once again claim Arab leadership (Doran 2006, p.117).

The 'moderate' foreign policy of Mubarak is apparent when considering relations with the two most crucial states to Egypt: the US and Israel. Mubarak maintained a moderate, middle path when dealing with them. While abiding by the strategic partnership that Sadat established with the USA, Mubarak was eager to present himself to Egyptians as defending the country's independence. For example, in 1983 he refused to accept \$500 million in U.S. aid to develop Egypt's Ras Binas naval military base (Al-Awadi 2003, p.75). Egypt also refused to support President Reagan's 1985 bombing of Libya. In the second half of the 1990s, Mubarak opposed Clinton's tough sanctions against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. With regard to Israel, continuing the steady progress in foreign policy achieved in the 1980s, Mubarak managed to position Egypt as a mediator at the heart of the Middle East peace process in the 1990s. The Mubarak regime consistently emphasised their apparently unique situation in mediating the Arab-Israeli conflict, due to its alliance with the USA and established diplomatic relations with Israel. Mubarak perceived that the resolution of the conflict peaceably, with a preeminent role played by Egypt, would enhance its position as a powerful actor in the region. Egypt's defence of the Camp David accords and consequent moves to normalise relations with Israel, was redeemed when Syria, Jordan and even the PLO sought similar peaceful resolutions to conflict with Israel (Karawan 2002, pp.166–167). The preserve of Egypt's foreign policy had been the Palestinian-Israeli question, first as a mediator between Israel and the Palestinians, then between the different Palestinian factions (Pioppi et al. 2011).

However, being the peace process mediator did not prevent Mubarak from establishing a solid path of 'cold peace', which stood the test of time. While emphasising the regime's commitment to the peace accords, full normalisation of relations might well have jeopardised Mubarak's legitimacy. A prime example of cold peace in action was Mubarak's refusal to visit Israel, which he adhered to bar the attendance of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's funeral in 1995. He also refused, due to Prime Minister Netanyahu's intransigence over implementing the Oslo Peace Accords, to participate in the Multilateral Economic Conference in Doha, despite US requests. Egypt had protested that they were pressured by the USA to become party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, despite the exceptional position allowed to Israel over its non-signing. The regime clearly championed the Palestinian cause and denounced Israeli violence in the Occupied Territories, reflected in diplomatic moves such as the withdrawal of its ambassador to Israel in November 2000 against the backdrop of the second Palestinian intifada (Karawan 2002, p.166).

Political Arabism was also invoked by the Mubarak regime, with the adoption of Arabist rhetoric in an overt manner. Karawan (2002, p.166) noted the eminence of Arabist rhetoric in the regime's approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict, emphatically tying further rehabilitation of Israel to the resolution of various disputes. Indeed, the revival of Nasserist ideology in certain circumstances, although largely symbolic, was intended to satisfy the domestic audience, capturing the popular critical sentiment toward Israel. That was clear in the performance of the Foreign Minister Amr Moussa, whose personal charisma significantly enhanced the regime's ideational legitimacy in the 1990s. Moussa's consistent and vocal willingness to speak out over Israel's actions in the Palestinian territories, furthermore contrasting with US administrations' biased perspectives, garnered the support of a vast swathe of Egyptians. His positive reputation in Egypt and across the region was only aided by the Israeli media's repeated ad hominem attacks (Stacher 2007, p.110). Amr Moussa's tremendous reverence in the public eye largely stemmed from his consistent, vocal and disdainful condemnation of Israel's activities. Resultantly, he caused waves in the US administration, due to his unusually outspoken and uncompliant attitude. He entered cultural memory during the second Palestinian *Intifada*, with the song, 'I hate Israel and love Amr Moussa' by mainstream artist Sh'aban 'abd al-Rahim.

The words of a Nasserite middle class Egyptian citizen, who was politically inactive since Sadat visited Jerusalem in 1977, summarises how Mubarak's foreign policy at this period managed to enhance the level of ideological legitimacy, compared to Sadat:

"This man is good. He has to do what he is doing. He does not visit Israel as his predecessor did for no good reasons. He believes in the Arab world and attempts to help. However, his hands are tied by what Sadat has done to him and to us. He even named his younger son, Gamal, after Gamal Abdel Nasser!" (Shahin 2012).

4.3.2 Political Islam and Fighting Terrorism

The second pillar of the regime's ideological legitimacy, particularly during the 1990s, was its war on terror. The spread of terrorism in the 1990s, indeed, bestowed moral justification for the state as the only capable bulwark against terrorism (a theme that will be dominantly repeated after under President Sisi as it will be shown in the seventh chapter).

Islamic radicalism rose in Egypt from the early 1990s. This was an extension of the strong waves of religiosity that stormed Egypt after the 1967 war, as a reaction to the cruel defeat. It was convincingly argued that the 1967 defeat was perceived by many of the Egyptians and Arabs to be

a cultural defeat, not only political or military; a fact that pushed them to resort to religion (namely Islam) to find a solace and also an alternative worldview other than the defeated Arab nationalism. Furthermore, in the 1970s and 1980s, with various global dynamics empowering the rise of political Islam, such as the Jihadist War in Afghanistan, the sweeping religious sentiments found a way to express itself. A significant contributory factor was the end of the War in Afghanistan, with the return of around 800 trained and battle-hardened Egyptian Jihadists. The state faced a declaration of war by radical Islamist groups, with relations having significantly deteriorated due to the influence of the returning jihadists within the movement. While the prospect of the Egyptian state being overthrown by violent radical Islamist groups was unlikely, the regime nevertheless had to begin a counterattack soon after. Although there had been outbreaks of violent conflicts in Egypt before due to radical Islamist activities, the wave beginning in the 1990s was marked in its scale. The Egyptian state faced united, well-organised and well-planned strikes from various violent jihadist groups. They made a clear declaration of their intention to overthrow Mubarak, installing an Islamic state in his place. To this end, a concerted effort was made to assassinate various members of the government, including the President and the Prime Minister (Abaza 2006). In 1995 Mubarak escaped an assassination attempt, as did Nobel Laureate in literature Naguib Mahfouz. Targets of terrorism included senior government officials, such as the Speaker of the Parliament, Dr. Rifaat Al-Mahgoub, senior police officers, tourists, and Egyptian Christians.

Indeed, the regime seized this opportunity to boost its legitimacy inside. It claimed to be tackling the ideological roots of extremism. All means of counter-information were adopted to disseminate an anti-extremist message. State media condemned violence targeting civilians as anti-Islamic and *haram*, a message that was reiterated through legal declarations from the preeminent religious leaders in Egypt, the Grand Mufti and al Azhar's Grand Sheikh (Cook 2012, pp.165–166). The ideational implications of the war on terror were grave. The state, while on a level mobilising the secular intellectuals against the Islamist threat, allowed in the same time a larger margin for, what they deemed, 'moderate', Islamisation of society. The rising conflict between the Islamists and the regime was largely taking place at the symbolic, ideological level. Particularly in the years prior to Sadat's assassination, there were many overt examples of increasing Islamisation by the state, especially on TV. The call to prayer was cut across television shows, while sheikhs regularly appeared on programmes. The Ministry of Information became dogmatic in the 1970s in censoring scenes of apparent impropriety, those showing alcohol consumption, adultery or amorous scenes. During the 1990s, women wearing the headscarf in films and TV series became much more common. Particularly until the growth of satellite TV ownership towards the end of the 1990s, the

domination of state-owned channels meant such increasing religiosity was viewed by vast numbers of Egyptians, almost all of whom lived in homes with electricity. Furthermore, state TV became an important medium of communication due to low literacy rates in Egypt. Indicative of the importance given by the regime to state media, former Minister of Information Safwat Al-Sherif had declared that it could be utilised to protect ‘real’ Islam from violent Islamist threats. The state’s legislative response with regard to Islamisation was summed up by a significant constitutional amendment in 1980, which meant sharia law was no longer simply a primary source for legislation, but its foundation. This essentially backfired, as Islamists fully understood the simple façade of the regime’s religiosity, therefore the amendment compounded their demands for a true Islamic State.

Meanwhile, secularists were filled with deep unease at such changes. Certain governors in Egypt’s regions were emboldened by the central government’s Islamisation programme, taking their lead in passing sharia-based laws. The banning of alcohol consumption in 1986 in Assyut was particularly significant as it was in a majority Christian area. Any inclusion of secularist opinions in legislative debates was intentionally hindered by the state’s creation of the Islamised legislative structures. Commitment to such structures of legislation by no means meant the state invoked sharia’s dogmatic enforcement. Rather the structure was intended to provide a façade, a theoretical commitment to Islamic law, as opposed to a concerted effort to impose it practically. “They [the regime] thought that if you want to fight terrorism”, said a former senior official who worked close to Mubarak, “then you have in the same time to confirm the message that your enemy is extremism only not Islam itself. Increasing the religious tone in the society was therefore a good strategy to neutralise religious people from the equation” (M.E. 2013). Indeed, that was not, on the longer run, as productive as it was expected. This symbolic adherence to Islamic regulations was counter-productive; it alienated secularists, who condemned the Egyptian state for being mild with the ideology of political Islam, while Islamists demanded much greater Islamisation (Abaza 2006, pp.18–19). As it will be discussed in the following chapter, the state’s double-standards policy paved the way for the MB to capture the imagination of vast segments of the population leading to its victory in the post-2011 parliamentary and presidential elections.

Furthermore, much of the Islamist/state conflict played out in competitive displays of piety. There were myriad aspects to the Egyptian society’s “re-Islamisation.” Sharia law was made fundamental to the composure of legislation, while all areas of government decisions, whether in politics, economics, of society, were influenced by Islamic jurisprudence, the opinions of religious academics or ulama. The intention of the state in institutionalising Islam, making it an essential consideration in decision-making, was to appease Islamists and undermine their support base.

Counterproductively, increasing Islamisation of mainstream activities of government and society was highlighted and exploited by Islamic radicals, in an attempt to shift the middle ground in a more radical direction (Abaza 2006, pp.V–VI). The apparent threat from Islamists to the state might well have proved expedient to both Sadat and Mubarak, with the entrenchment of their authoritarianism on the basis of the need for security against the severe menace posed by political Islam. This argument resonated in the international arena, where the Egyptian state could argue it was a bastion of democracy and liberty against extremism. But the apparent pragmatism in re-Islamising Egypt could be argued to have haunted the state in the long-term, and proved difficult to roll back.

4.3.3 Mubarak's personal legitimacy

Mubarak had a set of contradicting personal traits that some of them played to his advantage in the first 20 years of his tenure, while the others were counterproductive in his last 10 years in power (as will be shown in the next chapters). Mubarak was known to have a cautious personality, particularly compared to former President Sadat. He deliberated and discussed at length before making choices. Another personal aspect was Mubarak's military generation; having not been part of the 1952 revolution Free Officer's cohort, he was the first professional, de-politicised army officer to govern Egypt as both Nasser and Sadat left the army early and were fully politicised. Mubarak's disciplined upbringing and nature granted Egypt with much needed stability. Another consequence was that, as Mubarak was not politicised, he was more pragmatic in his consideration of domestic politics and his ability to deal without sworn animosity with different political factions; i.e. the MB, the Nasserites, the liberals, etc (Al-Awadi, 2003).

Mubarak's personal character might well have made him the most suitable candidate to replace Sadat. Mubarak's background in the military gave him a serious bearing, yet calmer nature. This reflected Egypt's desire for more stable and peaceable times, given Nasser's revolutionary Arab nationalism, Sadat's own political, economic and social upheavals, alongside the growing conflict with the Islamists. This created an intense thirty-year period of disruption, which it was hoped Mubarak would bring to order, increasing Egypt's assuredness and stability (Osman 2011, pp.180–181). There also appeared to be less vanity in Mubarak's personality, striking a marked contrast to Sadat. Mubarak's style of self-referencing, his discourse and addresses, all differed to Sadat's. He appeared more focused on his job to deliver practical solutions to Egypt's problems, rather than the personal esteem in which he was held, or his bequest to future generations. Sadat had worn a military uniform designed by Pierre Cardin; he invoked the legacy of ancient Egypt in

carrying a pharaonic cane, while constantly switching between his place of retreat and palaces (Osman 2011, p.181).

Mubarak was indeed successful in consolidating his power during much of his rule and consistently managed to eradicate any potential competition from opposition or allies alike. He has consistently rotated individuals out of positions of political influence, if they have been considered as rising too highly in popularity. For example, and however useful Moussa's charisma for the regime's overall legitimacy, as it was shown earlier in this chapter, it was harmful for Mubarak's own legitimacy. Moussa was touted as a potential Presidential successor, with petitions even circulated calling for a free and open presidential election; such was his admiration within the politically astute sectors of society. Despite Moussa's high regard among the Egyptian population, Mubarak's inner circle saw that very fact as troublesome, a prominent cabinet minister with a possibly significant independent base of support. Mubarak moved to replace Moussa with Ahmad Mahir in May 2001, whose popular appeal was significantly less. The esteemed Amr Moussa and Ahmad al Guwalli were both excluded from influencing Egyptian politics and polity, by being transferred to the Arab League. Another perceived threat to Mubarak was Field Marshal Abu Ghazzala, who proved to be a significantly revered figure. Consequently, for over ten years he was put under house arrest, excluded from public view and unable to garner attention or support. Mubarak also carefully chose those who were in positions of significant power. The technocratic Habib al-Adli, as Minister of the Interior, presented as uncharismatic, unlikely to attain popular favour, so less threatening to Mubarak. Former Prime Minister Atif Ebied's personal reputation was also damaged, tainted through his association with the Egyptian public's suffering from the 1990s neoliberal economic programme, Fathi Surur, a former Speaker of Parliament, also suffered similar detriments in his personal regard by ordinary Egyptians. While General Tantawi as Defence Minister was a decorated veteran of three Israeli-Arab Wars, creating a potential for a personality cult to form around him, he was largely innocuous (Zahid 2007, p.152).

4.4 Conclusion

It was normal and logical that Egypt's new President, Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, would depend more on other sources of legitimacy rather than the eudemonic and ideological legitimacy. After the 1967 War and the changes that Sadat made to Egypt's foreign policy orientation and which negatively affected the state's ideological legitimacy, it was inevitable for the state, if it wanted to

preserve a minimal level of its legitimacy, to invest in institutional legitimacy, through enhancing the status of democratisation, rule of law and the role of institutions.

This chapter was divided into three sections. Institutional legitimacy, as the most primary source of the Mubarak regime's legitimacy, was the subject of research in the first section. It was argued that Mubarak endowed the state with what could be termed 'institutional stability'. At the time Mubarak came to power the achievement of stability was crucial. The attainment of stability in practice could be viewed as a significant success of the Mubarak era. Egypt experienced myriad dramatic and radical transformations under Presidents Nasser and Sadat, leading to profound and far-reaching changes in the political, societal and economic spheres. Mubarak came to power amidst a severe crisis which had culminated with President Sadat's assassination, part of a failed Islamist coup d'état. Mubarak therefore fully acknowledged the risks resulting from the absence of co-existence between different political and social forces. His rule was thus characterised by an approach of governance which could be termed the 'the semi-open society'.

Secondly, the lesson of the Bread Riots in January 1977 can be considered a primary reason why Mubarak opted for slow-paced economic reform. For as long as he could, Mubarak maintained the remnants of the Nasserist populist social contract between the Egyptian state and its constituencies, particularly the state's bureaucracy. Consequently, the second part of this chapter sought to investigate Mubarak's economic record. More specifically, it was explored how Mubarak continued reforming Egypt's economy- even presiding over heightened economic performance post-1991- while preserving the social base from which he garnered legitimacy, avoiding significant unrest until a few years prior to the January 2011 uprising.

The third section of this chapter discussed how Mubarak attempted to cope with the weakness of ideological legitimacy. Sadat was assassinated by Islamist military officers who were outraged by Sadat's negotiation of a peace deal with Israel. Resultantly, Mubarak thus instrumentally used both Egypt-First and Arab identities to counter-balance the transnational ideational calls from Islamists and extreme Arab Nationalists. The state under Mubarak adopted a moderate foreign policy that balanced between its immediate interests with the West and Israel and its historical ties with the Arab world. Mubarak also vehemently opposed political Islam and fought terrorism. This was despite allowing, or at least not seriously preventing, a consistent Islamisation of society, which reflected the strategy of political compromise that the Mubarak regime employed. Indeed, the severe threat posed by radical Islamists suggested that regime legitimacy claims were not reaching the strata attracted to these movements. This strata of young people who joined the Islamist movements, was recruited from the classed that were affected by the roll-back of the state.

The Islamist social welfare networks managed to attract many people who suffered from the negligence of the state's social role.

Chapter Five

Mubarak's Legacy II

The 'Tawreeth' Project

As it has been discussed in the last chapter, Mubarak, until the year 2000, had to rely more on institutional legitimacy to compensate for the shortage in the state's eudaemonic and ideational legitimacy. Nevertheless, the Mubarak regime was keen to keep its claims to both sources of legitimacy. By controlling the economic reforms and slowing its pace, the state was able to continue claiming that it is still the ultimate protector of the poor and the bureaucratic middle class. Simultaneously, by maintaining a nationalist tone in foreign policy, the regime managed to absorb much of the resentment previously caused by Sadat's bolder reorientation of Egypt's foreign policy. However, as argued in the last chapter, the main mode of legitimacy under Mubarak - which was also claimed by the regime to be its 'original' contribution to Egypt's political life - was democratic openness and rule of law, in other words, institutional legitimacy. However, things have changed in the 2000s, especially with the rise of Gamal Mubarak and his neoliberal policies. This chapter's task is to offer a narrative for the period from 2000 to 2011, in terms of intra-regime politics (the rise of Gamal Mubarak and its impact on the state's institutions particularly the army), in addition to the impacts of the foreign policy, and neo-liberalisation of the economy. The following chapter will offer the analysis of the same period with regarding to the legitimacy of the regime.

5.1 Gamal Mubarak and the 'tawreeth' project

During the 2000s, it was obvious to observers that Mubarak's activity and presence had begun to decrease in line with his aging. In 2003, Mubarak passed out while delivering a speech before the parliament (YouTube 2003). In 2004 and 2010, he undergone successful surgeries in Germany, while in 2009 he catastrophically lost his eldest grandson Mohamed at the age of twelve, significantly worsening his morale¹¹ (Al-Ahram 2004; BBC 2010; BBC 2009). During this period, and indeed after the failed assassination attempt of Mubarak in Addis Ababa in 1995, the succession of the President, who had never, at variance to his predecessors, appointed a Vice President, started

¹¹ Many sources close to Mubarak indicated that the man lost part of his appetite for work as a result of his grandson's sudden death. See: (ElwatanNews 2014; El-Deeb 2014).

to be a crisis. While Mubarak's successor would have been expected to be naturally form the Armed Forces, as was the case since 1952, the dramatic rise of Gamal Mubarak casted doubts on the future of the President's office in Egypt, and created the first succession crisis for the Egyptian contemporary state. Gamal Mubarak's rapid ascendance in the Egyptian politics was termed the '*tawreeth*'—Inheritance—project by the opposition. The so-called *tawreeth* project, it is argued in this chapter, cost Mubarak and his regime their very existence as the ruling regime of Egypt. It acted as a black hole that soaked up all the regime's attempts to legitimise itself.

5.1.1 Gamal Mubarak and his associates

As a result of his aging status, Mubarak appeared to be more lenient towards pressures from his nearest and most trusted individuals who sought more power. At that point came the role of Gamal, his youngest son (Osman 2011, p.146). After studying business administration at both the bachelor's and master's level at Cairo's American University, and previously attended Egypt's prestigious and longest-established private English-language school, St. George's College, Gamal began his professional career as a junior investment banker at the Bank of America (BoFA) in London following a brief period of employment at the Cairo branch. In 1996, he launched the private equity firm MedInvest Associates after moving from London back to Egypt. Gamal then proceeded to establish in 1998 the Future Generation Foundation (FGF), which was a nongovernmental organisation designed to further the careers of young Egyptian youth in public policy and business. He joined the ruling National Democratic Party after contemplating the launch of his own party. By the year 2000, Gamal's political status had risen dramatically (Cook 2012, pp.169–171; Stacher 2007, p.116).

In January 2000, Gamal became part of the General Secretariat for the NDP. In September 2002, he was assigned as head of the newly-established Policies Secretariat (PS). The PS was primarily responsible for modernising the NDP and creating its policies. It was responsible for seven smaller committees and became the most prominent committee in the party (Zahid 2007, p.141; Stacher 2007, p.139; Cook 2012, p.169). Under the PS's umbrella, the Higher Policies Council (HPC), composed of 125 members forming most of Egypt's business and political elites, was established to be the platform for wider debates on the major policy issues before the PS finally decides on them. The establishment of the PS and HPC helped to a great extent in co-opting many of the elites and rotating them in the decision-making process. Also, the NDP's deficiencies in intellectual and political arenas were partially compensated by the existence of some of the best Egyptian minds in the PS and HPC (Pioppi et al. 2011, p. 38).

During the 2000s, Gamal's closest advisors were pivotal in managing the Egyptian political life. This group of advisors, mostly businessmen and neoliberals, soon became the focus of public attention as a result of the rising status of Gamal (Cook, 2012, p. 171). Most of these men had a Western education, neoliberal orientation, and had worked previously in international organisations and multinational corporations. The majority of Gamal's associates had spent time overseas for academic or employment purposes, were young in age, were quick and sharp, innovative and in favour of economic reform. These people were technocratic individuals operating in the business or academic arenas.

The rise of Gamal and his men was manifested in the 2004 cabinet, which was comprised of various pro-Gamal members. The new cabinet under Ahmed Nazif, the then-new 52 years old Prime Minister who was the youngest PM to fill in this position since Nasser's era, represented a more up-to-date, contemporary and Western-minded mentality: something that reflected Gamal's vision of achieving a new way of thinking. All of the cabinet's chief members were able to hold their own in discussions with other leaders in the Gulf, the US and Europe, had achieved degrees at leading higher education establishments in Western countries and could speak English and/or French fluently (Osman 2011, p.147; Zahid 2007, p.146).

The most important figures amongst Gamal's associates included Mahmoud Mohieddin, who held postgraduate degrees from York and Warwick universities in the UK. After finishing his PhD he held a professorship at Cairo University in Economics. He was later appointed as the head of PS's Economic Subcommittee and Minister of Investment. Mohammed Rashid was appointed as Minister of Industry and Trade. Previously, Rashid had directed Middle East operations for Unilever. Another close associate of Gamal Mubarak was Youssef Boutros Ghali, the Minister of Finance who had studied economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the US and, since the 1980s, had been in each government of Hosni Mubarak's (Cook, 2012, p.171-172). Muhammad Mansour (ex-president of AmCham Egypt) was assigned the role of Minister of Transport. This role had also been assigned to Ahmad Maghrabi, a leading figure in the tourism sector, the year prior. Maghrabi went on to become the Minister of Housing.

Further close allies of Gamal Mubarak included Professor Mohammed Kamal, who had been educated at John Hopkins University and was born in to a bourgeois family from Port Said. Dr. Kamal was appointed as the head of the PS' Youth Subcommittee. Physician Hossam Badrawi was also an associate of Gamal, who had become involved in politics at the turn of the millennium. Until the 2005 elections for parliament, Badrawi had represented Cairo's Qasr al-Aini district in the People's Assembly. He had a reputation as a pro-reform liberal especially in the field of education

where he preached for more privatisation of education and lesser reliance on state education. Badrawy was the head of the PS' Education Subcommittee. Members of Gamal's advisory team also included Ahmed Ezz (the 'Emperor of Iron', a multi-millionaire). Ahmed Ezz was the Secretary of Organisation in the NDP's General Secretary, one of the most important positions in the party. Finally, Aly Edlin Hilal (a political scientist) was the Minister of Youth and a member of the NDP's PS, and was known to be the political guru of Gamal Mubarak (Zahid 2007, p.141). Apparently, numerous prominent actors in the business arena were appointed in the PS and in the 2004 cabinet. It is worth noting that the capitalists who had achieved great economic presence in Egypt since the 1990s represented the same class from which Gamal's leading group members were selected (Osman, 2011, pp. 146-147).

The PS' networks were expanded and strengthened under Gamal's leadership and the involvement of his associates. The status of the PS rose further at the NDP's 2003 conference, with Ahmad Ezz being appointed head of the steering committee. Given the individual strengths and networking abilities of Gamal's associates and the strengths of Gamal himself, members of the group were perceived as being the NDP's most influential, progressive and impressive drivers of reform (Stacher 2007, p.119). They were perceived as the new ruling elite of Egypt. Gamal's collected, in-control, diligent and conscientious personality had been well-recognised by those around him and he was considered by many as a parallel President of Egypt to the extent he was often called 'the boss' '*ya rayyes*' in the meetings of the PS, a term that is usually linked in the ruling elites' circles with only the President himself (H.B 2013).

Gamal's liberal views on economic reform were adopted by the cabinet. Through the involvement of well-established supporters of market reform, including the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt (AmCham Egypt), it was possible for this newly established association of neoliberal technocratic policy supporters and business actors to impact government policy for their own self-interest or that of their class. For example, after 2004, sales of state-owned land increased, contributing to the formation of a real estate boom and bringing gains to the related Maghrabi and Mansour families. The latter two families have a joint partnership in an investment fund focused on major firms operating in the housing development sector (Pioppi et al. 2011, pp.39–40). Also in 2004, the income and corporate tax reduction (to 20%) was instigated by the then-president of AmCham Egypt, Taher Helmi. Helmi had a profound impact on the NDP with regards to support for flat-rate tax and had significant influence as a leading member of the party's Economic Affairs committee. Gamal Mubarak and Taher Helmi also impacted policy through their financial contributions to the Egyptian Center for Economic Studies.

The new neoliberal class represented an extension of the *infatih* interests. It included the government, a number of prominent Egyptian charity and civic organisation, the banking sector, a number of the economy's greatest and most significant sectors, major NDP-controlled parliamentary committees and secretariats, the PS and various key NDP vehicles. Along with a strong connection to the Coptic Church, the new group was also tightly associated with the most influential Christian economic tycoons in Egypt (Osman 2011, pp.147–148). This network was based on a blend of business interests, neoliberal ideology and familial connections. It could be observed that the actions taken by Sadat towards the end of the 1970s were being replicated by Gamal through his establishment of powerful economic associations. This being said, Gamal's methods were more contemporary and methodical than Sadat's patrimonialism. Gamal was successful in appointing the desired capitalists, communicating projects and ideas, and promoting the elites close to him through the implementation of a new internal party structure. Furthermore, most of Gamal's supporters were top-level businesspeople, whereas Sadat (and Hosni Mubarak) had relied on the intelligence and military forces.

The rise of the new neoliberal elite was accompanied by removal of the so-called 'old guard'. There was obvious clash of interests between the two groups. The new elite, aiming at liberalising the economy and lessen the role of the state in the economy, threatened the established economic interest of the old guard (Roll 2010). The split became abundantly clear in 2005 at the annual conference of the NDP, where the typically-noteworthy NDP's senior leader Kamal Al-Shazli was no longer as significant. Absent from the conference was the long-standing (since 1985) secretary general for the party, Youssef Wali. Gamal and his group ensured that the conference would be steered in a direction of their choosing through their involvement in agenda creation and press briefings, although the conference primarily focused not on political but on economic reform in Egypt (Stacher, 2007, p. 122). Youssef Wali's appointment to the role of deputy chairman took him out of the picture by restricting his executive power. As Deputy Prime Minister and agriculture minister for 22 years, the party had been under the influence of Wali for a significant period of time before he was withdrawn from his role (Pioppi et al., 2011, p .36). This represented a clever move by Gamal in representing himself both as a political saviour who was able to diminish the authority of long-established members of the NDP and a key driver of reform and modernisation (Zahid 2007, p.14). Wali had faced roundabout scandal in the form of corruption charges placed against Youssef Abdel Rahman, Wali's undersecretary at the ministry of agriculture (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 36). Furthermore, a procurement case had been served before the court to the Egyptian national televisions' director of news, Muhammad al- Wakeel, a close associate of Safwat al-Sherif, the

former Minister of Information and one of the closest aides of Mubarak. Additionally, just seven days prior to the Congress, a close parliamentary associate of Kamal al-Shazli faced charges of loan fraud (Stacher, 2007, p. 114).

Although these men; i.e. El-Shazli, El-Sherif and Wali and their associates, were not the totality of the old guard, they however were not only known for their abuse of the political system but also for their ability to bounce back after scandal, and their networking capacities were vast due to the time they had spent working within the political realm (Stacher, 2007, p. 114). With the exception of President Mubarak and those related to him, like the Presidency's Chief of Staff Zakariya Azmi, the General Intelligence Service Director Omar Soliman, and the Parliamentary Speaker Ahmed Fathi Sorour, the aforementioned figures can be said to have been the most unassailable political actors in Egypt through their highly-public engagements with society and the elite, despite constituting only a small number of those in the top tier. By diminishing their roles to less important roles, Gamal and his new elites aimed to be perceived, by the majority of people who hate the 'old guard', as true, capable reformers who can lead Egypt to a better future.

Of these three men, Wali may have been the first to fall at the hands of Gamal, but the other two were not far behind. For instance, whilst al-Sherif had been serving in the role of Minister of Information since 1982, and al-Shazli had been appointed to the position of Minister of Parliamentary Affairs since 1996, both were removed from their positions in a restructure that brought a high portion of Gamal's group into ministry positions in July 2004 (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 36). Al-Sherif, who had built his status upon intelligence experience, was replaced by Anas al-Feqi as the new Minister of Information. Anas al-Feqi was known with his strong connections to the First Lady Suzanne Mubarak as well as to Gamal himself. At this time, al-Sherif re-positioned himself as a solid advocate of change within the party. Accordingly, he was kept in another top political position as the Shura Council Speaker. As the Shura Council Speaker, al-Sherif was the head of the Political Parties Committee (PPC), a committee that has the power to approve or deny party licensure and serve as a regulatory body for party followers. Additionally, al-Sherif was also able to exert influence of newspaper licensure through his role as head of the Higher Press Committee. However, al-Sherif's real power as Mubarak's aide had already deteriorated and his influence on domestic politics was now second to that of Gamal and his new associates. Similarly, al-Shazli had originally been elected at the 1964 People's Assembly and had incomparable insight into local politics gained through an extremely lengthy tenure. Al-Shazli was, in fact, amongst the world's longest-established members of parliament until his passing in November 2010, and he served a crucial purpose in the elections of 2005 as an electoral strategist for the party. Al-Shazli's prominent

role as the long-serving party secretary (or whip) was taken by Ahmed Ezz, a major associate of Gamal, in February 2006.

Whilst it was unusual, to say the least, for Gamal and his group to rise above the elites who had already established themselves, this situation only serves to illustrate the ways in which depoliticised institutional systems can exclude even the most senior elite members (Stacher, 2007, p. 114). As outlined above, three key old guard members of the NDP – El-Shazli, El-Sharif and Wali – were successfully given decreasing influence, were pushed out and were fully or partially excluded, respectively. President Mubarak has been pressurised by Gamal and his associates not to protect his old men. It was argued in front of the President that these men lack ‘the language of the modern time’ and they are highly hated in the street to the extent of de-stabilising the reform efforts that Gamal leads (M. Elbaz¹², 2011).

What were the reasons, and consequences, of the rise of Gamal and his neoliberal associates? It can be proposed that Gamal’s increasing prominence was meant as a solution to the post-populist state dilemma. By increasingly relying on economic partnership with the capitalist bourgeoisie, it was natural that this bourgeoisie seek more political influence and more decision-making powers. They, the bourgeoisie, and the new middle class that was the product of continuous economic liberalisation (as will be elaborated in the next chapter), wanted a more open political system. Gamal’s prominence offered a route towards achieving this goal. Gamal was recognised as a member of the ruling state bourgeoisie by birth and was also part of the business class that had risen significantly during the 2000s and somewhat during the previous decade. In that way, Gamal could be argued to have been the bridge through which the new alliance between state bourgeoisie and the new powerful business bourgeoisie could cement their alliance. Through Gamal, as the only one in Egypt that had the trust of both political and business elites, Egypt was thought to be able to complete its post-populist transformation into a complete neoliberal state. The accommodation of Gamal and his new elite needed different political arrangements than the existing ones. Here came the idea of upgrading authoritarianism through the political *infatih* that accompanied Gamal’s rise. What was needed is a new way through which the regime could accommodate its new ruling elite without jeopardizing its authoritarian stability.

¹² Dr. Mohamed Elbaz was a member of the Economic Subcommittee in the NDP’s PS, headed by Dr. Mahmoud Mohieddin, the then-Minister of Investment.

5.1.2 Political liberalisation or introducing the 'tawreeth'?

A number of political liberalisation efforts was made in 2003 and the two years that followed (Abdulbaki 2008, pp. 126-127). For instance, the government presented Law 94 and Law 95 of 2003 on the 16th of June that year, the approval of which would permit the creation of a National Council for Human Rights and the eradication of Law 105 of 1980 (responsible for permitting the formation of State Security Courts). Via amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedures (under Law 105 of 1980), the regime managed to restore the authority of the Public Prosecution whilst preserving the State Security Emergency Courts (which deal with emergency law violations). These measures were taken despite the necessity for standard criminal courts to be accountable for security crimes, as per the amended legislation. The regime appeared to respond positively to the voices of political reform.

However, the most significant turn to a concerted 'modal' democratic opening was indeed Mubarak's 2005 amendment to the constitution allowing, for the first time, multicandidate presidential elections. This dramatic change is congruent with the line of upgrading authoritarianism. The idea was to create the façade of democratic opening while keeping it under the control of the President and the new (neoliberal) political elite. Thus, while Mubarak enhanced the democratic process by allowing multicandidate presidential elections, the NDP parliament members made sure that the change becomes contentless. On the 10th of May, parliamentary approval of the amendments was granted and the approval of the voters was then requested. Article 76 of the constitution was drafted in a way that made the nomination for the president's office unattainable except for whoever was agreed upon by the regime. Article 76 outlined the conditions for potential presidential candidates. It was described by scholars as "the worst of all previous speculation" (Stacher 2005). Its main provision was that a potential presidential candidate needed 300 people from the parliament (*Maglis al-Sh`ab*, *Maglis al-Shura*), and the local councils (*Al-Magalis al-Mahlaya*) to endorse him. A candidate needs at least 65 MPs (14.6%) to be signed on, 25 Shura Council members (around 10%) as well as 10 elected local councilmen in 14 of Egypt's 26 governorates. Obviously, as the NDP had a majority in all these councils, it was only attainable for candidates that the President and the NDP approves and want them to run for the elections (Stacher 2005).

Those in competition with the ruling party had little chance to actively compete under the new amendment. Thus, key members of the opposition demanded a boycott of the referendum on the proposed amendment which was held on the 25th of May 2005, with the reason being the failure of the presented amendment to ensure that elections will be fair, transparent, and free. Furthermore, the electoral supervising body of the Egyptian judiciary insisted on being freed from the hold of the

executive branch and would not agree to supervise any polling stations. The amendment was approved despite the low number of attendees participating at the referendum. The former procedures that played in favour of the ruling party were still echoed in the presidential elections that were held in September 2005 despite being the first multicandidate elections. One of the obstacles to fair competition was that candidates were not given adequate time to build a strong campaign. In fact, the election campaign only ran for a total of 19 days commencing on the 17th of August. Furthermore, given that Egypt's population stood at around 72 million, at the time, the restriction on election campaign spending to a limit of 10 million pounds was low, equating to approximately USD \$1.7 million. Whilst President Mubarak was indulged with limitless media coverage during his time in office, opposition candidates also—for the first time since 1952—managed to benefit from a limited level of media coverage and exposure for their campaigns (Abaza 2006, pp. IV-V).

It became clear on election day that the election process was not democratic; something that came as a blow to the opposition. This being said, the opposition still benefited in certain ways through these elections. For instance, the aforementioned media access enabled them to reach out to high numbers of people in Egypt. It was clear that very few believed the elections to be of real value, with only 23% of registered voters actively taking part in the elections. Effectively, the idea of a democratic free election was largely impossible in the overall context of the time (Abaza 2006, pp. IV-V). Mubarak, who was 78 years old at the time, presented himself as the one leader who had the ability to ensure the nation's 'crossing into the future'. Here, the president had clearly wielded his words carefully and with purpose: Mubarak wished that the Egyptian public associated him with the country's most successful contemporary military victory (Cook, 2012, p. 173). In the midst of building, supposedly, democratic source of legitimacy, Mubarak recalled the one sort of ideational legitimacy that he knew was the most effective with Egyptians: protecting sovereignty and fighting Israel.

The MB was the biggest winner of the limited liberalisation efforts of that period. The group's status in the 2005 parliament was dramatically enhanced, winning 88 seats out of 440 parliamentary seats (20%). Consequently, the influence of the MB came to the immediate attention of the regime, and the government leveraged both the law and various strong-arm tactics in an attempt to inhibit further advances by members of the MB. The infamous constitutional amendments of 2007 marked the pinnacle of a series of moves made by the regime against the Brotherhood, including private property and business seizures, a rise in the number of members placed under arbitrary arrest, and a heightening of limits placed on the actions of the MB, such as.... However,

even given the challenge posed by the largely-MB opposition, the NDP had been fully able to dominate legislation during the period in which just 73% of the former parliament's seats were controlled by the party (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 32).

The parliamentary elections of November 2010 marked the heyday of the political exclusion practiced by the regime, which resulted in an absence of independent opposition in the parliamentary elections (Pioppi et al. 2011, p. 9). The results of this election, in which the NDP won all seats not held by independents advanced the long-expected potential for Gamal's presidency to take place in 2011, given that the only parties that were allowed involvement in the presidential nominations were those with parliamentary seats. It was suggested by a high number of analysts that the elections were meant to finalise the last arrangements of the *tawreeth* project. Others also proposed that the elections represented an mistake on the part of security services, which overreacted in anticipation of the coming presidential succession. It is still unclear who was mainly responsible of the management of the 2010 elections, which presented a distinctive landmark in the relation between the regime and opposition, leading large segments of opposition forces to declare the regime void of any democratic legitimacy. Abdullah Kamal, a prominent journalist who was close to both Gamal Mubarak and Ahmed Ezz, claimed that the party was not responsible for the management of the elections and that it was Habib El-Adli, the Minister of Interior, who administered the process in such a way that granted the NDP 90% of the overall seats (Kamal 2013). In Mubarak's trial after the January Uprising, the General Prosecution accused Habib El-Adli of applying a security policy that aimed at laying the grounds for the *tawreeth* (CNN.Arabic 2012). Regardless of whoever was responsible for the decision to excluding the opposition entirely from 2010 parliament, most political powers believed that the regime wanted to nominate Gamal as President in the 2011 presidential elections, and it wanted no dissenting voices in the parliament against it.

Although Mubarak and Gamal denied more than once that there was any intention of Gamal being groomed for Egypt's presidency, their claims were hard to believe. Aly Edlin Hilal, the prominent Egyptian political scientist and one of the closest political and intellectual figures to Gamal, noted that during the last years before January 2011, Mubarak's determination in denying the possibility of *tawreeth* was diminished (Hilal 2015). Gamal's growing status since he came back to Egypt, and Mubarak's approval of that, were sufficient to make many believe Gamal to have been going through a grooming process that would put him firmly in line to become Egypt's President. This was an image that struck at the core of Egyptian republican ideology. According to a senior officer in the Egyptian General Intelligence Service (GIS), who thinks that Gamal's reforms were positive and most needed for the Egyptian economy, "the main problem was Gamal himself". He

adds that “with the son of the President of a republican state on the top of the pyramid, it was inevitable for every one in Egypt to believe that Gamal is being groomed to be the next President, no matter how many times the President and his son deny their intention for *tawreeth*”. Indeed, “this perception irritated many vital sectors in Egypt, both within and outside the state apparatus. It was almost impossible for all these radical changes; i.e. the rise of Gamal, the transformation of the economy, the rise of the neoliberal elite, to pass on smoothly without causing drastic disturbance” (K.M. 2013).

5.1.3 The Army and the *tawreeth*

In the context of intra-regime competition, the army, understandingly, would be the most important and crucial component. It had always been, since 1952, the ultimate reference of power in Egypt. In the 2000s, it could be argued that the army was the most influential power that indirectly rejected the rise of Gamal. Since he assumed power, Mubarak continued the trend that Sadat had begun in dealing with the Army. Hinnebusch (1988) described this trend, explaining that at the beginning of Sadat’s rule, “the military formed a privileged ruling elite, however, under Mubarak,...it had been reduced to a much smaller, weaker component of the elite. Its claims for a decisive role or veto even in its field of special responsibility had been repeatedly defeated” (p.131). All major foreign and defence policy decisions had been presidential initiatives, often without consultation or the advice of top generals. So, “the military still had some input, informally or through the consultations of the National Security Council, into defense policy, but its role had been reduced to that of simply giving political advice” (Hinnebusch 1988, p.131). During Mubarak’s thirty year presidency, military officers held less than ten percent of all ministerial positions (Stacher 2007, p.75). Mubarak weakened the political role of the army even more than his predecessors (Frisch 2013, pp.182–183). Indicative of that was Mubarak’s ability to fire his Minister of Defence Mohamed Abu Ghazala in 1989 without any consequences from the army. Abu Ghazala was known to be “a hero of three wars with Israel and the second most powerful man in the country after Mr. Mubarak” (Cowell 1989). He was indeed quite popular both in the army and in the Egyptian street. Many thought he was more qualified than Mubarak to succeed Sadat, as he was the Minister of Defence at the time of Sadat’s assassination as well. Mubarak kept Abu Ghazala in the army until the year 1989 when he fired him abruptly against the backdrop of the US administration’s objection to a claimed implication in a smuggling controversy involving Egypt, Argentina, Iraq and 13 US firms. The army’s depoliticisation at the time proved effective and the impeachment of the army’s strong man just passed smoothly (Joffe 2008; Cowell 1989).

The peak of the army's depoliticisation was the 2000s. Mubarak continued weakening the army's political role by enhancing the power of the MOI at the expense of the army. He had better rapport with Habib El-Adli, the Minister of Interior, and Omar Soliman, the director of the Egyptian Intelligence Services, than any army figure, including veteran Minister of Defence and Military Production, Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, who had held that post since 1991 (Frisch 2013, p.183). However, Mubarak, fearing that there might be clandestine work against him inside the army, appointed his close man in the army, Sami Anan, who was Commander of the Egyptian Air Defence Forces, as the army's Chief of the General Staff. The appointment of Sami Anan was to the detriment of Tantawi who commented on the issue saying that "the man [Mubarak] would never abandon his divide and rule game" (Kamal 2013).

It is instructive at this point to illuminate the rising economic role of the military during Mubarak's rule, even while its political role was declining. Under Mubarak, the military managed to preserve its long list of financial and industrial privileges, including: subsidised fuel inputs; lucrative real estate control; conscript labor; capital equipment transferred under arms sales agreements; preferential access to state contracts, alongside special permits allowing extralegal oversight in sectors ranging from petrochemicals to tourism (Marshall 2015, p.5). Egypt's military leaders hedged against Mubarak's economic reforms, diversifying their economic portfolio. Instrumental to this was financing and technology across the foreign and domestic private sectors, while forming joint partnerships with various nonmilitary businessmen and foreign interests. Such an unprecedented diversification of funding and technology sources allowed the army to enter global supply chains, in industries ranging from automobile manufacturing, computer hardware production, and wastewater recycling to solar panel fabrication. The military also preserved its role as a significant domestic supplier and subcontractor for infrastructure development, such as wind farms aided by financing from foreign donors (Marshall 2015, p.5). Additionally, Marshall noted how the army secured, "small shareholdings in some of the high-profile projects that formed an important component of the Mubarak regime's economic program—including the privately operated cargo container facilities that were being built at Egypt's maritime ports" (p. 5).

The reasons for the increased role of the military were twofold, according to a military source. Firstly, to avoid the fiscal crisis of the state's budget, while attaining handsome revenues for the military to be used in covering the army's needs, whether for weapons purchasing or enhancing military personnel's quality of life. Secondly, the army wished to avoid revealing what is considered to be a 'military secret'; i.e. the army budget (E.H. 2013). To sum up, it could be argued that there was an implicit bargain between Mubarak and the army. In return for its exclusion from politics and

domestic political life, the army would have free hand to profiteer from its privileged position in the economy. However, with the increasing presence of Gamal Mubarak and his neoliberal policies and people, the latter bargain ceased to exist, and then the army's politicisation increased.

It is argued that the leading position of the military – both economically and politically speaking – was perceived to be at risk by Gamal's agenda (Alarabiya 2012b). The military did not believe Gamal to have gained enough experience to truly grasp Egypt's complicated security issues and be capable of leading the country. Consequently, months prior to the January 25th demonstrations, President Mubarak faced heavy demands from army generals to steer clear of any desire to offer the presidency to Gamal (Bakri 2016). The president was also cautioned that the military were exploring the potential to remove him from the picture completely (Alarabiya 2012b).

The relation between Gamal and the army was complicated. The rise of Gamal exploded the intra-regime coherence that once was crucial in assuring smooth transitions of power from Nasser to Sadat and from Sadat to Mubarak. There is evidence suggesting that the army felt threatened by the rise of Gamal and his neoliberal group in the government and the NDP. Based on Gamal's longstanding political and economic grooming for presidency, it made sense that Gamal was the major candidate for succession. The Army, Field Marshall Tantawi himself, appeared to believe that there was a *tawreeth* project that only awaits the right opportunity. According to Mostafa El-Feqi, the former secretary of President Mubarak and one of the most well-connected politicians and intellectuals in Egypt due to his long career in the MFA, the Presidency, the NDP, and the parliament, Tantawi asked him in deprecation: "So, should I understand that Ahmed Ezz [the mentor of Gamal] will rule Egypt? Isn't Egypt a state with institutions?" (El-Feqi 2012). In another TV interview, after the January 2011 uprising, Brigadier Mohamed El-'assar, the Minister of Defense's Assistant, stated that the army's major issue with Mubarak was the *tawreeth* project (El-Assar 2011).

It could be argued that, while Gamal's rise met minimum resistance inside the NDP and the bureaucratic institutions of the state including the MOI; the army didn't see Gamal as a viable solution to the succession crisis of the regime. However, although it is very premature at this stage to decide whether the army "plotted to save army rule even while Hosni Mubarak was in power", according to the words of Richard Spencer in The Telegraph (Spencer 2014), it could be safe to note that the army did encourage the dissent against Mubarak even before the 18 days of Tahrir Square. According to a well-networked political activist, the army was not only indirectly protecting some of the Nasserist writers who often vehemently criticised the regime and particularly the *tawreeth*; i.e. Mohamed Hassanein Heikal and Abdel Halim Kandil; it also partially funded the Egyptian Movement for Change, or *Kefaya* ('Enough'), the biggest and most powerful opposition group in

Egypt since 2005 (R.A 2015). To say the least, the January uprising was indeed a “golden opportunity” for the military (Kandil 2012, p.5). It was not conceivable that the army would move of its own against Mubarak, no matter how much it perceived his regime to be void of legitimacy, or it would have been considered as a blunt military coup. Any movement against the regime had to come from the society, which was already boiling at that point (as it will be explained in the next chapter).

In a bid to achieve their objectives of preventing Gamal from reaching power with minimal resistance, military leaders positioned themselves, as the uprising started, as a more public-minded, protective and trustworthy group of advocates than the heavy-handed Egyptian police force. The military was able to effectively uphold their national duty as an army whilst removing the greatest threat to itself – the Mubarak regime – through the protests that ensued during the January Uprising (Alarabiya 2012b). The Army, dominated by the old, traditional, Nasserite-like leader Hussein Tantawy, perceived Gamal’s neoliberal reforms as a threat to the Egyptian social cohesion and to the army’s own economic interests. The tension between the army’s leadership and Dr. Nazif’s government, which was perceived as Gamal’s government, was well known in Cairo’s political circles. In many occasions for example, Tantawy rejected the government’s plans to sell the state’s assets in the context of the privatisation program (Hilal 2015). Indeed, “The day the people resolved to overthrow their rulers, the military was no longer invested in the regime; it has become the least privileged member of the ruling coalition that emerged out of the 1952 coup” (Kandil 2012, p.5).

5.2 The Heavy Costs of Foreign Policy

The political arena of both the Middle East and the world underwent rapid changes during the period discussed in this chapter. These changes, particularly given the regime’s legitimacy issues, left Egyptian’s own politics subject to grave consequences. Hosni Mubarak had to contend with strong demand for political reform following the collapse of the Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussein after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. Even before the invasion of Iraq, the George W. Bush administration employed a heavy-handed democracy promotion’s policy in the Middle East post-9/11 attacks. The alliance between the American and Egyptian presidents was markedly impacted by these demands, and Mubarak’s yearly visits to Washington ceased. In a further surprising move, Mubarak was seen to leave the room once Bush began to speak at the World Economic Forum, which was held in Sharm el-Sheikh in May 2008 (Osman, 2011, p. 148). Indeed, the unprecedented pressures of the US on Egypt for more democratic opening created an ideal platform for the plight of the Egyptian opposition forces in its struggle against the regime (Xiaoqi, 2012, p. 79).

At the same time, the regime's foreign policy in this period played a major role in shaking what was left of the regime's ideological legitimacy. As it was explained in chapters 3 & 4, Sadat and Mubarak had to replace Nasser's Arab nationalist foreign policy with a policy relying on 'Egypt-First' as the top determinant of the country's foreign policy. This being said, Mubarak in particular was keen on keeping a balanced Arab nationalist tone in the foreign policy, as shown in chapter 4. Although it was clear in the street that Egypt was not the powerful regional player it was under Nasser, Mubarak was relatively successful in the 1980s and 1990s to reflect the image of an 'internationally-respected' Egypt to his people. However, the 2000s witnessed major changes in this image causing a significant damage in the regime's ideological legitimacy that collided with loss in institutional legitimacy to create overall erosion in the regime's legitimacy.

During this period, a predominant perception that Egypt became helpless in the region, and not influential, even diplomatically, was created. This period saw the rise of non-Arab regional powers on the expense of the Egyptian role in the region. Particularly, Turkey and Iran had taken every opportunity to lead the Middle East. Turkey vitalised its role in the Middle East under the leadership of Erdogan and Ahmet Davutoğlu, the foreign policy advisor and Minister of Foreign Affairs during this period, who established the 'zero-problems' policy with neighbouring lands allowing Turkey to focus more on the Middle East. Due to its alliance with the Kurdish Regional Government and central government of Iraq, Turkey steered itself to become highly significant to the Iraqi powers. Furthermore, Turkey has also organised discussions between Syria and Israel and, following the 2010 flotilla event after Israel's 2009 attacks in Gaza, started to play a part in the Palestinian issue, appearing as a new champion of the Palestinian cause, with all the powerful Arab sentiments that are attached to this cause. Compared to Egypt, Turkey showed itself to be far more effective and opportunistic in taking advantage of a chance to rise within the region, not least of all through the leveraging the discord in Palestine (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 72). In addition to Turkey's repositioning, Iran is another state that has worked to raise its status in the Arab world on Egypt's expense. Whilst Iran was relatively unsuccessful in leveraging delicate topics during the 1980s, an era that marked the height of the exportation of the Islamic revolution, it exhibited far more competence in its more recent attempts through its Islamic rhetoric and strong alliance with Syria, Hezbollah and the Palestinian factions.

Thus, it was evident that other countries – having demonstrated their skill in slipping onto the stage at a time of US interventionism and the globalisation of the economy – had replaced Egypt's leadership position in the Arab world (Ahmed 2011). Whilst Iran was using the hegemony of the US to present itself as head of a resistance front to Washington and Israel, Turkey was

positioning itself not as an opponent of the US but as a comparable or alternative choice to Egypt for dealing with various problems based on the rapid globalisation and growth of its economy. During the 2000s, Turkey and Iran both achieved the greatest success in their roles in the Middle East. However, whilst Wikileaks cables confirmed that the Bush administration acknowledged Egypt for supporting the US in conflict with Iran, supporting the post-US invasion government of Iraq, and acting as a crucial mediator between Israel and the Palestinians, Egypt was seen by wide sectors of its society as unable to restore its position as a pivotal actor in the Middle Eastern arena (Ahmed, 2011).

The wars of Lebanon 2006 and Gaza 2008/9 were pivotal in transforming Egypt's foreign policy image from being neutral' between Israel and the Arabs (as a broker of peace negotiations) to an image of full complicity with Israel against the Arabs. The last two wars between Hezbollah, Hamas and Israel saw Egypt standing unprecedentedly firm, condemning the former two for their accountability in the conflict. Despite Egypt coming under the criticism of both the media and diplomats, as well as facing pressure from major protests outside its overseas embassies, Egypt did not agree to open the Rafah crossing between Sinai and Gaza; a stance that has been depicted particularly by the influential Qatari *Al-Jazeera* TV as a direct participation in Israeli siege of Gaza. In a television interview with Ahmed Abul-Gheit, the then-Egyptian foreign minister, Abul-Gheit was quoted as saying that Egypt would refuse to budge on its foreign policy, nor would the country allow foreign policy to be influenced by any form of propaganda. However adamant Egypt's position was, it cost the regime a major loss of ideological legitimacy, with *Al-Jazeera* TV channel declaring a full propaganda war on the Egyptian regime's foreign policy, and Hassan Nasrallah, the highly-respected figure among Egyptians, appeared on a televised speech asking the Egyptian army to force the President to open the Rafah Crossing to allow safe passage to the Palestinians in Gaza into Egypt (Shahin 2010, pp.38–39).

Indeed, the impact of the regime's foreign policy in the 2000s on its ideological legitimacy was profound. As it has been previously explained in the first chapter, foreign policy is crucial to ideological legitimacy. The main theme of the legitimacy deficit at the time was a perception that the regime was risking Egypt's national security for the sake of securing the approval of the international powers for the *tawreeth* project. Egypt's foreign policy was perceived among different elite circles as being harmful to the Egyptian interests and 'betraying' the Arab and Islamic identities of Egypt. More importantly, many perceived the status of Egypt in the region as declining and its importance diminishing. According to many activists, politicians and even members of the foreign service, Egypt's foreign policy was degraded to the level of bluntly serving Israeli and US interests

to the detriment of the Egyptian national interests (Harb 2013; E.S. 2013); for example, one Egyptian diplomat resigned in protest at “unjustified submission” to foreign powers (Negm 2012).

To indicate the loss of ideological legitimacy of the regime to the favour of other Arab and Islamist ideologies, it is sufficient to explore the findings of a poll conducted by the prestigious Egyptian Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies on the most popular figures in the Egyptian street in 2006. The poll found that the most Middle Eastern popular figures in Egypt were as follows: 1) Hassan Nasrallah of Hezbollah (82%), 2) Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran (71%), 3) Khaled Mash'al of Hamas (60%), 4) Osama bin Laden of al-Qaida (60%), 5) Mahdi Akef of the MB (45%), 6) the Egyptian diplomat Amr Moussa of the Arab League (35%), 7) Marwan al-Bargouthi of Palestine (31%), the Islamic preacher Amr Khaled (30%), 9) the Egyptian opponent politician Ayman Nour (29%), and finally, the Egyptian-Qatari Islamist preacher Youssef al-Qaradawi (28%) (Al-Arab 2009; Elbaz 2006). Among the ten most Middle Eastern popular political figures in Egypt, only two Egyptians were in the list, with none from the government or pro-regime.

Finally, in this context, it could be argued that the personal traits of Mubarak and Gamal played an important role, after 2000, in diminishing the regime's ideological legitimacy. Indeed, Mubarak's public presence, especially after 2000, was perceived to be distant, formal and distinctly separate from the public. Mubarak made no genuine human connection with the people, and when thinking of him, one could only picture him attending state affairs and ceremonies (Osman 2011, p.183). Although he was reputed to be a fan of Egyptian folk music and squash matches, the Egyptian public was left at a loss when attempting to understand Mubarak's character, emotions and thoughts due to his lack of public engagement in such activities (Osman 2011, p.183). Indeed, Mubarak was widely perceived to lack the statesmanship of Nasser and the charm of Sadat. However, he was exemplar in the realms of creating policies and implementing tasks (Osman, 2011, p. 180).

Additionally, Gamal was perceived to be too British to the Egyptian taste. Unlike many people his age, Gamal had been raised as the son of a vice president and, eventually, president. Whilst many of his peers faced difficulties in employment, healthcare, housing, transportation, or education,, Gamal had enjoyed a privileged upbringing. He never positioned himself as a voice of the people, likely understanding that he and they had not shared a similar life experience. Indeed, Gamal presented himself as Western-oriented, somewhat patronising, elitist and aloof: attributes that do not tend to foster widespread public support (Osman 2011, pp.151–152). Furthermore, as Gamal was linked to liberal capitalism, he carried on his shoulders the unpopularity of this ideology in Egypt. Legitimacy was indeed an area of weakness of Egyptian liberal capitalism, a force that

failed to spread beyond the top tiers of society. Liberal capitalism held little weight with the general public compared to Arab nationalism and Islamism, with its lack of legitimacy being personified by Gamal himself. It is true that Gamal demonstrated extreme conscientiousness and solid leadership abilities through his position within the NDP. The younger Mubarak had political tenacity, intellect and drive, as demonstrated through his successful command of the party. However, compared to others of his position in the economic and financial sectors, Gamal's lack of edge and confident charisma left him unpopular with much of normal Egyptian society (Osman, 2011, p. 151).

In sum, this lack of personal, ideological and institutional legitimacy of the regime made the eudaemonic legitimacy the last resort of the regime to hold itself together. However, the latter was doomed to fail the regime as a consequence of the neoliberal reform of the economy in the 2000s, leaving the regime almost void of any level of coherent legitimacy and vulnerable for collapse under the pressure of the first serious test it will face.

5.3 The Bitterness of Neoliberalism

As the status of the regime's institutional legitimacy, which became, since Mubarak took office in 1981, the most basic source of the regime's legitimacy, was going through drastic changes, and ideological legitimacy to dramatically erode, as explained in the previous two sections of this chapter, it was the eudaemonic legitimacy which was supposed to keep a minimum level of public acceptance to the regime, especially when it was going through a major succession crisis that had bearing on institutional legitimacy and in which it needed even more support from the society, the opposition and the state's institutions alike. However, the economy itself was the theatre of other upheavals; namely the rise of neoliberalism as the more powerful evolution of Sadat's *infitah*. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the domestic political economy (particularly in terms of the associations between the Egyptian social classes) underwent a deep transformation as a result of the economic reforms that occurred during the 1990s (Roccu 2012, p.16). Indeed, from 1991 until 2004, there was an increasing change of the state's relationship with the new bourgeoisie. The relative weight and influence of this class rose above the roles and importance of the technocratic and military-based elites of the past. The establishment of Ahmed Nazif's government in 2004 represented the height of this shift – an emphasis that continued to accelerate over the next seven years until the outbreak of the January uprising in 2011.

There was wide consensus among observers that the neoliberal reforms of the 2000s had, a technically positive impact on the Egyptian economy. The reforms marked a significantly positive

transformation in the economy, with Egypt making its mark on the global map, boasting strong macroeconomic performance and a thriving private sector that had come to represent over 70% of all domestic economic activity (Cook 2012, p.173). During the 2000s, the government's social spending was cut, the tax system underwent reform, the Egyptian money markets were liberated, and the Egyptian pound floated; actions marking a number of restructuring moves driven by the regime (Osman 2011, p. 142). The period that spanned 1991 to 2003 witnessed the sale of 210 firms at a value of \$3.1 billion for the state. In the markedly shorter period between 2004 and 2009, however, the state acquired approximately \$7 billion through the privatisation of 191 firms (Cook 2012, p. 176). The economic growth rate in Egypt reached a height of 7.1% in 2006/07, denoting a four-year period of significant economic growth (Pioppi et al. 2011, p. 9).

At the same time, Egypt experienced a swift rise in FDI inflows and exports., These successes led Egypt to gain recognition from the International Monetary Fund and join the ranks of the most rapidly-growing economies in the Middle East (Achcar 2009). Gamal Mubarak, the leader of the economic reform, regularly proclaimed that whilst everyone else focused on broadcasting theories, he and his associates were taking action. In a bid to demonstrate commitment to change, the 2004 government – backed by the NDP – implemented various economic and other programs, with perhaps the most noteworthy instance being the banking sector's restructuring. The following three years marked a series of events including a central bank transformation that resulted in the modernisation and enhancement of Egyptian monetary policy, the privatisation of various banks, recapitalisations and a number of forced mergers that resulted in the eradication of underperforming banks. As Osman (2011) noted: “the liberal capitalist camp was positioning itself as a confident, competent and poised force for change in the country. The message was not just ‘we can sort out the banking sector or work out economic policies’, but also ‘we can and deserve to rule’” (p. 151).

Nevertheless, despite rapid economic growth in Egypt after 2005, the depreciation of the Egyptian pound caused a significant rise in prices. The NDP's rhetorical values with regards to protectionist economic policy, free healthcare and free education were no longer emphasised by Gamal and his associates in their push for reform (Stacher 2007, p. 139). Additionally, the cost of public transport increased as a result of 50% cuts on diesel subsidies (Stacher, 2007, p. 121). At the same time import duties on around 100 luxury consumer goods were removed by the new cabinet by the end of August 2004, including the elimination of the 40% duty on 1300-1600-litre fuel injection cars. In Stacher (2007) words: “in keeping with the PS' neo-liberal economic discourse on modernising Egypt, the reforms reflect willingness to partially reduce lower class populist rights while expanding the secretariat's appeal with the critical middle classes” (p. 121). With a population

of 18 million, inequality in Cairo became stark, with the affluent and impoverished continuously interacting and appearing – quite literally – side-by-side.

Furthermore, the price increase in popular consumer products and food items had a rapid effect on the lower and working classes. In May 2008, Egypt suffered a bread scarcity that marked the height of these issues. Between 1998 and 2004, 1,000 demonstrations were held by the working class, with the latter year witnessing a dramatic increase and regularity of protests (representing 25% of all protests carried out during this period) in line with the introduction of the new economic team. Despite the severity of protest activity that occurred in 2004, 2006 witnessed even more unrest, with a total of 222 protests and strikes occurring in the state-owned sector (Cook 2012, pp.177–178).

In parallel, unemployment was increasing at a rate of 18-21% amongst 24-25-year-olds (Osman, 2011, p. 143). This was a significant issue, since this age group represents the bulk of Egypt's workers. Another issue at this time was housing, and the restructuring that took place between the 1990s and 2000s was often criticised as a reflection of the regime shirking its social duties. Furthermore, the unemployment and housing issues that plagued millions of young Egyptian people also meant that it was more difficult for them to be able to get married. Many middle class individuals suffered from worse living standards due to the double-figure inflation rate that existed during these years (Osman 2011, p.143).

Indeed, Egyptians suffered from a social welfare crisis over the last 20 years, and particularly after the year 2000. The country's healthcare and education services suffered decline due to overspending on public sector salaries and the failure of social spending to keep pace with the rising growth of the population (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 17). It appeared that state welfare measures had indeed been plummeting particularly over the 2000s, with a significant decrease in public spending with regards to social services. For instance, whilst public spending on education services stood at 19.5% of all expenditure in 2002, this figure dropped to 11.5% in 2006. Of all education areas, one of the most noteworthy spending cuts has occurred in the higher education sector. Additionally, compared to similar countries, Egypt's public spending on healthcare was minimal (ibid). As noted above, salary payments represent a significant portion of public spending. However, those working in the healthcare sector still suffered a poor quality of life. Furthermore, per-capita spending on health has decreased over the last 10 years as a result of population growth. Public health spending was seen to decrease between 2008/09 to 2009/10 in response to the 2008 financial crisis. As a result of these cuts, the quality of services provided by the public healthcare and education sectors also plummeted.

The government attempted to ease the hardships of Egyptians. It still funded the Egyptian food subsidy program in an attempt to counteract public unhappiness with price increases. Furthermore, the government made the decision to include an additional 22 million individuals in the country's ration card program in 2008 as well as offering higher allowances to those already participating in the system (Pioppi et al., 2011, pp. 12-13). Civil servant salaries became a focus of the government, which increased civil servants' annual social bonus from 10% to 15% and then to 30% in 2006, 2007 and 2008, respectively. This being said, the declining purchasing power of the people were not compensating for by the above efforts to counteract the increasing price of food in Egypt. In fact, it is believed that around 25-33% of those living in poverty could not take advantage of the country's food subsidies (World Bank, 2007; cited in (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 13).

Furthermore, a high proportion of the population survived on a salary that was unable to help them meet the increasing cost of living. Those employed in the informal sector suffered most of all, since it is only those employed in the public sector that can benefit from government-imposed wage increases and the aforementioned social bonuses. This being said, inflation had made it impossible for a number of public sector employees to achieve a good quality of life despite this group being the main focus of such initiatives. Consequently, many individuals working in the public sector became disgruntled with bonus delays and low salaries, as illustrated by the rise of strikes and protests that increasingly rose since the summer of 2004. Thus, the needs of those working in the public sector and the declarations of the government were polarised: something that is reflected clearly in continuous conflict over the national minimum wage (which will be one of major January uprising's demands). These consequences had dire effects on the nature of the bureaucratic middle class's participation in the January uprising, as it will be discussed in the following chapter.

It could be argued that most of the fruits of Egypt's rapid economic growth during this period were not cascaded down as expected due to the mechanisms of Egypt's strong crony capitalism. A World Bank study (quoted in Chekir & Diwan 2013, p.3) showed that while economic reforms in the Middle East look immaculate in theory, it turns into a different thing on the ground, raising the difference between "de jure and de facto rules". The study attributed that difference to the "granting of privileges to a select few, which has reduced the competitiveness and dynamism of the economy" (ibid).

Indeed, the association between neoliberalism and corruption were exposed by opponents of the regime and became almost an axiom in the Egyptian political arena. The 2000s marked a period in which long-established inequality within the country reached a point of severity, in no small part

due to Egypt's growing population but also to the corruption and reckless wastefulness that have been major features of the crony capitalism of the country (Osman 2011, p.153). Egypt was ranked 115th (out of 180) in Transparency International's 2008 Corruption Perceptions Index, denoting an extremely high level of perceived corruption in the country (Osman, 2011, p. 152). This ranking had worsened dramatically in a short period of time since the 2005 report, in which Egypt ranked 70th (out of 158 countries). Corruption could be seen to be entrenched across the board of Egypt's socioeconomic existence (Osman 2011, p. 153). However, it was the first time in Egypt's contemporary history since 1952 for those facing charges of corruption to be assigned roles of high status within the ruling NDP. Accusations of corruption against many senior NDP members included disrespect for the law, the leverage of political authority for the purpose of obtaining mandates and contracts from the government, and various other acts of corruption conducted in government agencies and ministries. Furthermore, accusations and stories around the Mubarak family's corruption were widespread (Deutsche-Welle 2011). For most Egyptians, the 'marriage of wealth and authority' was indeed the popular theme at the time (Abdel-Fattah 2007). An interesting demonstration of this argument could be seen in the audiences' response to *Tito*, an Egyptian movie that was released in 2005, wherein the audience clapped in strong agreement with an objection uttered by the protagonist of the film. Here, the character pointed to the affluent-looking people surrounding him exclaimed, 'But they are all thieves!' when he himself faced accusations of theft (Osman, 2011, p. 152).

Thus, whilst the country was recognised for its economic growth and commitment to market reforms, the failure to ensure that this growth is used to positively impact the Egyptian people and expand the quality of life of normal Egyptians meant that the regime's welfare legitimacy received a major blow in the 2000s. Because there was a serious level of distrust between the lower and middle classes and the Egyptian elite, this further worsened the legitimacy issue. Many believed that affluence and success had been achieved via corrupt, distasteful and dishonest means. It became abundantly clear in basic observations of the environment, as well as in the opposition's media accounts, that various individuals were exploiting the power they had gained and were in ruthless pursuit of profit: actions that are not conducive to building trust. The theme of the era was intellectually summarised by a book's title that was published in 2001, even before the dramatic rise of Gamal Mubarak's neoliberalism. 'The Third Looting of Egypt: From Infitah to Privatisation', was the title of the Nasserite intellectual Sa'd Eddin Wahba. The first looting was meant to be the one that happened during Khedive Ismail's rule, while the second referred to the days of Sadat (Wahba 2001). Again, the socio-economic hardships were perceived to be yet another consequence

of the '*tawreeth*' project, where Egypt is being looted by the new heir and his 'gang' (Ahram Online 2011; Shawky 2011).

5.4 Conclusion

Basic factors in the legitimacy formula upon which Mubarak has relied on during the 1990s had changed. This chapter examined the political changes related to the state formation during the abovementioned period, which basically diminished the institutional legitimacy of the regime. It was argued that the succession crisis, especially after and due to the rise of Gamal Mubarak, President Mubarak's son, was the weak spot of the whole regime, as it directly hit the heart of the regime's institutional legitimacy, which was its central source. The succession crisis and the so-called *tawreeth* project (inheriting power by Mubarak to his son) opened the way to delegitimise almost all aspects of the regimes' policies even those that would have not been illegitimate otherwise. This chapter also examined the changes in Egypt's foreign policy and its impact on the regime's ideological legitimacy, as well as the impact of the increased neo-liberalisation of the economy and its drastic effects on the regime's eudaemonic legitimacy.

Chapter Six

The Collapse of Legitimacy

The January Uprising

6.1 The Middle Class

As it was stated in the last chapter, the regime during the 2000s deviated from its own equation of legitimacy: institutionally through the *tawreeth*, economically through neoliberal crony capitalism, and ideologically through failing to convince Egyptians that the country was not losing its status in the region to other powers such as Israel, Turkey and Iran. The last chapter explained how among the state's institutions, the army and the bureaucracy were fed up with the Mubarak regime. The army perceived the *tawreeth* as a threat to both the national security of the country and to its privileged interests. The bureaucracy was threatened by neoliberalism and the shrinking role of the state in the economy. This chapter continues addressing the societal reasons of the uprising. As it was argued in the first chapter, three groups were pivotal with regard to legitimacy: *hezb el-kanaba* (the couch party), the youth of the middle class, and the Islamists.

6.1.1 Hezb el-Kanaba: The Victims of Neoliberalism

As discussed in the first chapter, the couch party is mainly rooted in the state-linked middle classes (SMC). As the MC's size increased under Mubarak, the social status of the SMC was in a state of decline, with the blossoming capitalist class becoming more empowered during the leadership of Sadat and Mubarak, and even more massively since 2000. At this point, the statist middle class was irrelevant to the creation of new financial and trading systems and urban industrial hubs. A new Egyptian upper and middle classes were formed. Consequently, the welfare, living standards and spending of the bureaucratic middle class decreased over time (Xiaoqi 2012, p.73).

This segment of the middle class; i.e. SMC, was the social base of protests since the 1970s (Xiaoqi, 2012, p. 78). It was primarily the city-dwelling middle class that led the pre-1995 regime resistance movements, since various protests and strikes were steered and implemented by those working for the lower and middle civil service sectors as well as those formerly employed by state-owned businesses. The new capitalist elite had been formed by a minute proportion of state-owned

business and administrative bureaucrats who utilised privatisation to pay for power. At the same time, inflation has caused the majority of administration workers, along with white collar employees of state-owned companies, to experience a lower quality of life. Some 500,000 employees of state-owned businesses have been forced out of their positions following the privatisation process that commenced in 1991. Indeed, in the words of Duboc:

“In recent years, Egypt has been experiencing the largest wave of labour action since the 1950s, with over two million Egyptians protesting in the workplace between 2004 and 2011...Labour protests have been organized in workplaces nationwide to voice the discontent of the sectors of society who had benefited from Nasser’s redistributive policies. While these protests have included groups whose economic and social status has been increasingly threatened by casualization, such as medical doctors, industrial workers, teachers and civil servants, the demonstrations staged by residents against water cuts, poor housing and crumbling public services, and also against unemployment, have exhibited the wider range of grievances that have affected all sectors of the Egyptian population (Duboc 2015, p.27).

With their socioeconomic status’s declining, the state was obviously losing its legitimacy in the SMC’s eyes. From the perspective of this group, Nasser’s efforts to promote the etatist vision were being abandoned after his passing, particularly under Mubarak’s rule. In the 2000s, with the dramatic increase in the freedom of media, explosions in the daily TV talk shows that discuss socioeconomic issues, and the launching of relatively freer press such as *Al-Masry Al-Youm* (the Egyptian Today), it was no longer possible for the grievances of the SMC to be hidden. Unlimited amounts of TV talk shows, press reports, TV series and cinema movies emerged on daily basis to channel expressions of the worsening conditions of the SMC. The regime might have thought that expressing the plight of the SMC would help in venting their anger. However, what really happened, as it will be obvious in January 2011, was that free media and the new culture of protest against the regime helped mobilising them and even increasing their sense of rage against the regime. Indeed, the number of strikes of workers and SMC members increased dramatically in the 2000s. For the first known time in Egypt’s contemporary history, the employees of the Ministry of Finance’s Tax Authority organised a strike that was only called-off when Mubarak ordered The Finance Minister Youssef Boutros Ghali to increase the salaries of these employees. In general, the SMC perceived Mubarak’s regime to be steeped in its desire for *tawreeth* so that the ruling elite could continue its corruption (Thabet 2015; BBCNEWS 2008; Eiweda 2007; Khafagi 2011). When the January

uprising erupted in 2011, the SMC, while not in the forefront of the uprising, indeed backed—even if passively—those who were in the front.

However, it could be argued that the main problem of the SMC with the regime was not only the deterioration of their living conditions but also the blockage of the future's horizons in their eyes. With the advent of neoliberalism, the stories around corruption and Gamal's rise in the context of a *tawreeth* project posed a threat that this poor quality of life would continue in the future and even get worse. In the words of Nagwa El-Mansy, a 56 years old manager in a governmental body in Cairo:

“Maybe we were receiving bigger income in the years that preceded 2011, but inflation was never bigger than it was in this period. Not only inflation, but also life in general became so difficult. Luxurious compounds were everywhere. They were only limited to a few rich. Neither me nor any of my sons would ever be able to live there. This gap of income between us [the government's employees] and other private sector businessmen was a result of corruption, which was everywhere. It was protected by Gamal Mubarak and his ‘gang’. They were looting Egypt to their benefit. They only wanted their man [Gamal] to be the new President of Egypt, so that they continue being richer and we may go to hell. Mubarak was too old to anything. Maybe he was part of that in order to secure the presidency's chair to his son. Everything was corrupt in Egypt. We could not take the humiliation of being inferior to everyone else in the society anymore. In January, and although my heart was aching when my two sons said they were going to Tahrir Square, I did not prevent them. I prayed to God that they would topple the regime and save Egypt from the disaster of becoming the Mubarak family's *Ezba* forever (manor)” (El-Mansy 2013).

Many other members of the SMC echoed this meaning in different words. In five different interviews with various members of the SMC, words like “corruption, looting, *tawreeth*, poverty, inequality”, were often repeated when asked to state if getting rid of the Mubarak regime was necessary and why it was so (Abdel Fattah 2013; Asem 2013; Amgad 2013; Mahmoud 2013; Abdel Rahman 2013). For example, Mohamed Abdel Fattah, a 48 years old employee in one of the governmental authorities in Alexandria, said:

“Mubarak was much worse than Sadat, and he cannot be compared to Nasser of course. Simply, he legalized looting, corruption. He made these practices legal and legitimate by law. He delivered the country to the corrupt businessmen with his son on the top of them. You know when a ruler is corrupt, it happens and can

be understood. But when the ruler attempts to legalize corruption and make it the norm rather than the exception, this is a disaster as it means that the future as well will be corrupt not only the present time. My sons deserve better future than this. That is why I was a strong supporter of removing Mubarak and his son from power” (Abdel Fattah 2013).

However, it should be noted at this point that the SMC was not the main power behind the January uprising. Indeed, the regime had lost much of its legitimacy in their eyes. However, no evidence suggests that they sought a fully-fledged revolution against it. It could be argued that the political imagination of this group did not entertain the idea of changing the regime altogether, for two reasons. Firstly, due to the dependency of these groups on the state they feared the economic consequences of any major change. Secondly, the patriarchal culture in which these groups were immersed, could only conceive protesting against the ruler/father but not ousting him.

6.1.2 The youth of the middle class (YMC): Explosion of Expectations

Compared to the state dependent middle class (*hezb el-kanaba*), political activity has been more frequent amongst members of the new middle class, with a change of its political orientation becoming manifest alongside the changing economic circumstances resulting from its growth (Diwan 2014, p.39; Brandi & Buge 2014, p.13) The YMC was the real power of the January uprising. It could be argued that while the SMC’s grievances were essentially economic, the YMC’s rage was politically driven. Although these youths were supposedly winners of Gamal Mubarak’s economic neoliberalism and the 2000s’ opening of the political sphere, their wrath had a different rationale. To understand this rationale, the role of the activists (*noshataa*), as the virtual leader of the whole YMC, should be understood first. This group included hundreds if not thousands of young men and women. However, their leaders were a small number of individuals who were a great source of inspiration for both the rest of the *noshataa* group and the whole YMC in general. Among the most influential figures in this group were, for example, people like Ahmed Maher, Israa Abdel Fattah, Asmaa Mahfouz, Alaa Abdel Fattah, and Hossam Bahgat. A brief profile of each of them would illuminate the background and influential role of the YMC.

Ahmed Maher, 31 years old at the time of the January uprising, was the co-founder of the April 6 Youth Movement, a group that was made to support the workers in El-Mahalla El-Kubra, an industrial town, who were planning to strike on April 6, 2008 and gradually became a popular

political movement. Maher organised several demonstrations after April 2008. In June 2010, Maher helped organise a protest against the killing, by Egyptian police, of Khaled Said, a young resident of Alexandria. Maher has expressed support for the potential bid of Mohamed ElBaradei for the Egyptian presidency (BBC 2017; Ahmed 2014; David 2014). Israa Abdel Fattah, who was 33 years old in 2011, is an Egyptian Internet activist and blogger and one of the co-founders of April 6 Youth Movement (Matthew 2014; Michael 2016). Asmaa Mahfouz, 26 years in 2011, an Egyptian activist and one of the founders of the April 6 Youth Movement, who has been credited with helping to spark mass uprising through her video blog posted one week before the start of the 2011 uprising (African Success Organization 2011; Amy 2011). Alaa Abdel Fatah was another influential figure. Alaa grew up in a family of activists. His father, Ahmed Seif El-Islam, a human rights attorney who had been arrested in 1983 by State Security Investigations Service officers and tortured and imprisoned for five years, was one of the founders of the Hisham Mubarak Law Center. His mother Laila Soueif, the sister of the novelist and political commentator Ahdaf Soueif, is a professor of mathematics at Cairo University and a political activist. His parents' activism dates to the days of Anwar Sadat. One of his sisters is Mona Seif, a founding member of the 'No Military Trials for Civilians', a group raising awareness on civilian detainees summoned by military prosecutors and investigating torture allegations involving military police. His other sister Sanaa Seif is a teenage student that co-founded a newspaper about the Arab Spring called 'Gornal' (Ashraf 2011; Egypt Independent 2014; Jahd 2014; Charlotte 2015; Amnesty International 2015). Hossam Bahgat, an investigative reporter and the founding executive director of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, a Cairo-based human rights organization (MadaMasr 2016).

The *noshataa* turned into a political class of its own. Political and human rights activists acquired worldwide connections with foreign governments concerned about democratising Egypt, especially the US and other Western capitals. Their definition of a legitimate political regime was centered on the level of the regime's respect to human rights and democracy. Because of their international posture/status, they were portrayed as public righteous figures in the relevant local and international circles, which endowed them with a level of moral immunity, but this did not prevent the regime from harassing them, however it raised the cost it had to pay from its international legitimacy credit. Furthermore, the *noshataa* class effectively led, through social media, most the YMC and dominated their opinion formation. By showing courage in protesting against the regime, they broke the barrier of fear and enflamed the imagination of thousands of young men from the YMC who were in rage because of the regime's disrespect of human rights, the deterioration of state's public services and other grievances such as the *tawreeth* and corruption. One clear example

of the causal impact of the *noshataa* is to be found in the famous YouTube video of Asmaa Mahfouz (Asmaa 2011). Asmaa posted a video online urging people to protest the ‘corrupt’ government of Mubarak by rallying in Tahrir Square on January 25. “Her video ultimately helped inspire Egypt’s uprising”. She said in this video that she will go down to Tahrir Square on January 25 alone. She urged the young men: “if you are a man with dignity come to protect me from the thugs of police and security”. She added: “don’t think you can be safe anymore. None of us are. Come down with us and demand your rights, my rights, your family’s rights. I am going down on January 25th and will say no to corruption, no to this regime.” (Amy 2011; Asmaa 2011). Other examples of how the *noshataa* led the January uprising could be manifested in the Facebook page “We are All Khaled Said”, that will be discussed later in this chapter.

Added to that, the YMC’s wrath at the poor’s and lower middle class’s deteriorating economic quality of life was driven by psychological reasons more than being affected themselves. Whilst a high number of these people were employed by large multinational, international and local firms and organisations, they have been highly active in demonstrating their social conscience through, for instance, the establishment of a policy on the national minimum wage. Given their acute awareness of the increasing gap between the living conditions of the poor versus their own rather privileged existence, a sense of guilt could be argued to be a major factor in their involvement with social issues. Many activists were vocal in defending social justice and demanding more attention being given to the poor.

The YMC perceived legitimacy in totally different terms than the SMC. For them, freedom of speech, assembly, elections and upholding human rights were the ultimate legitimacy criteria. The young activists have been exposed to a global environment through the emergence and popularity of new media. Through TV talk shows, independent press, then Twitter and Facebook, they developed a different, new consciousness. Indeed, social media offered new forms of organisation that proved so successful in mobilising the youth and transforming them from disintegrated numbers into a united block. Facebook was exceptionally pivotal in channeling information to the thousands of technologically-connected, middle class individuals involved in the January demonstrations, who were able to access the computers and Internet services that members of the lower classes could not (Xiaoqi, 2012, p. 80). For example, Wael Abbas’s blog, *Al-Waai Al-Masry* (Egyptian Awareness) (Abbas 2004) was one of the most influential blogs that mobilised the sentiments of thousands of Egyptians in the years preceding January 2011. Through this blog, several incidents of mob harassment of women and several videos of police brutality were broadcasted. That led to widespread waves of rage among the YMC against the regime and its incompetence and brutality.

Surprisingly, although Mohamed ElBaradei was the Godfather of these young men, it was Gamal Mubarak's rise that had a direct effect on politicising this class and led them to take an interest in political, social and public issues. The YMC has been keen to observe Gamal's movements within the political arena as an impact of Gamal's 'New Thought' initiative. They transformed from indifferent to invested in politics and paying attention to public issues. It could be safely argued that Gamal's rise had a collateral effect which was inspiring the youth and reawakening politics in Egypt. His rise, in the beginning, indeed made a brief moment of enthusiasm. This being said, they lost faith in Gamal over time, believing him to have no active interest in human rights, democracy and anti-corruption (thus, carrying out the same old Mubarak's agenda but in disguise). The words of a young man, 27 years old in 2011, who were among the most enthusiastic participants in January uprising and all ensuing revolutionary events, and has been injured more than once in clashes with the police, are illuminating in this regard:

"I never cared about politics before Mubarak announced the amendment of the constitution in 2005 to allow multi-candidate presidential election. I felt at the time that I became a full human being who has the right to freely choose his President. I believe that Egypt is 'retarded' because it lacks democracy. I thought that the amendment of the constitution was a result of Gamal Mubarak's efforts to modernise Egypt. He appeared to me as a modern, well-educated young man and I can admit that I, secretly, admired him very much. He was bright, confident and promised us a different future than our present reality. I thought that even if he was the son of the President that could be an asset that makes him able to apply serious reforms. However, soon after the elections, which were forged to allow Mubarak's victory, Gamal showed his real face. He only added to the misery of the poor and delivered the country to his rich fellowmen. He never cared about democracy and all what he and his father cared about was to finish the *tawreeth* project so that he becomes another corrupt dictator of Egypt" (Elsawi 2013).

Consequently, the middle class youth became opponents of the regime, and at this point the role of ElBaradei appears. In addition to his role as a facilitator between secular and Islamist opposition groups and successfully imparting legitimacy to the prominent MB and other Egyptian oppositional forces, ElBaradei was the 'Godfather' of the active youth. After losing faith in Gamal, ElBaradei filled the middle class youth with enthusiasm, self-belief and hope for a democratic, modern future that would be free of corruption. Middle class youth's support for the opposition was further strengthened in June 2010, when Khaled Said was murdered (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 9). Indeed,

Khaled Said's murder became the symbol for police's brutality against civilians. Said was a middle class young man from Alexandria. He had a private business (an Internet café). In 6th of June 2010, he was assaulted by two members of the MOI. Media reports and bloggers claimed that the officers demanded money from Said and, when he told them he does not have any; they began beating him inside his Internet café. The brutal beating continued outside until Said died on the street. A police vehicle later collected Said's body, and his family was reportedly told that Said died after choking on a packet of drugs (Pioppi et al. 2011). Said's sympathizers, however, believed he was killed because of a video he posted online showing the two officers exchanging money after a drug deal. Immediately following the death of Said, Internet websites were flooded with images of Said's disfigured face and body, and many people, including human-rights activists and ElBaradei, took to the streets in an expression of their outrage. The killing of Khaled Said also inspired an influential Facebook group in his name (We are all Khaled Said), created and administered by Wael Ghoneim, a Google's executive, and Abdel Rahman Mansour, a member of the MB.

Although the brutality of police was routine in Egypt, Khaled Said's murder was a turning point in the relation of the YMC with the police and hence the regime. The reason of that could be that Khaled Said was the first case that belonged to the YMC itself. He was depoliticised, only 28 years old with an innocent, friendly face. He appeared to his fellow young men as one of them, *Ibn nas* (well born), which is a common expression in Egypt that is used to identify educated disciplined young men that comes from respectable families and shows a character of decency and diligence. It was apparent that many of the YMC's youth identified with Khaled Said. The words of one of the YMC's youth are revealing in this regard. Noran Aly is a daughter of senior police officer. She was 25 years old at the time of Khaled Said's murder. Although Noran was working at the time in a prestigious position in the government, she was revolutionised by the death of Said. She said:

"I felt great oppression. Unlimited brutality. He was so innocent, nice and looks like one of us. I believed he was certainly oppressed and did not do what the police claimed that he did. I felt that the future in Egypt is sealed off because the country is full of corruption and unaccountability. I became more politicised and started to follow the news of protest movements in Egypt. On the 25th, although I was not able to participate in the demonstrations, I was full of enthusiasm and my heart was in Tahrir" (Aly 2013)

The youth were amongst a large portion of the Egyptian society that became politicised and acutely aware of the regime's ruthlessness. This marked the moment when the new middle class youth wholeheartedly rejected the compensation of political and socioeconomic safety in exchange for

their willing compliance (Monshipouri, 2014, p.1). This line of thought was represented in the writings of some of the intellectuals that represented the YMC's longing for change. Such writers included Alaa Al-Aswani, the Egyptian novelist and one of the co-founders of *Kefaya* (whose role will be addressed in the following section), Belal Fadl, an Egyptian screen-writer and columnist whose writings were very influential for the youth and Nawara Negm, a journalist, political activist and the daughter of the Egyptian famous poet Ahmed Fouad Negm (Al-Aswany 2011; Fadl 2012; Negm 2004).

The youth of the MC thus accepted the invitation of Wael Ghoneim, the co-founder of 'We are All Khaled Said' Facebook page, to demonstrate against the regime on the 25th of January 2011, getting inspired by the quick success of the Tunisian revolution which ended by the removal of the Tunisian dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali (Ghoneim 2011b; Ghoneim 2011a; Campbell 2011; Herrera 2014; Ghonim 2012).

6.1.3 Legitimising the Muslim Brotherhood

The accommodation of the MB in the 1980s and then in the 2000s had its cost on the regime's legitimacy. The MB had its own social and charitable infrastructure in Egypt, which was able to rival the state's provision of services. A prime example was the response to the October 1992 Earthquake, when the MB rapidly sent aid, engineers, doctors and pharmacists to the area. This response within a matter of hours contrasted markedly with the government's disorganised, sluggish response. The provision of social services had been a major component in the construction of the MB's wide support base. It is noted that the strategy to 'outsource' welfare from private charities was part of the upgrading authoritarianism discussed earlier in the last chapter. It helps to both relieve the burden on the state and co-opt these charities as well. Because the MB effectively filled a niche of service provision that the government was unwilling or unable to provide, the regime had typically ignored the Brotherhood's increasing political presence (Cook 2012, pp.165–166).

Thus, whilst the government was not capable of offering the level of social services demanded by the public due to the weight of macroeconomic issues, the MB was – and through it, it reawakened from its dormant state with a solid source of legitimacy and political power (Osman 2011, p. 93). Consequently, the MB stepped in where the regime could not, taking full advantage of the opportunity presented by the decline of the eudemonic legitimacy of the regime as a result of the socioeconomic impacts since the *infitah*. The social rise of the MB continued to expand, with Engineers', Doctors', Journalists' and Lawyers' Syndicates all in favour of the MB from 1992 to

2002. Indeed, the MB managed to penetrate the former-largely secular middle class. As Osman wittingly noted, it was clear that the MB could serve as an active and powerful voice for increasing parts of the middle class whilst simultaneously bringing down the regime (Osman 2011, pp. 93-94). Since the defeat of the 1967 War and the twilight of Nasserism, the Egyptian middle class could not be inspired by any liberal/secular political group (before the advent of democracy advocates in the 2000s) (Bowker 2010, p.3). The young professional workers and university students, along with other segments of the middle and upper-middle classes, became the key target of the Islamic movement (Osman 2011, p.149). In appealing to these groups, the MB had managed to position itself as a strong contender for the loyalty and support of the young, wealthy middle class youth who appreciated its intellectual, gentle facets. In comparison to Salafists, the MB was up-to-date with the capitalist atmosphere of the time and appreciated the value of technology, the Internet and social media in reaching the masses. Amr Khaled, an ex-member of the MB who gained enormous popularity and influence as a 'modern' Islamic preacher, managed to attract large numbers of the new middle class youth to the ideas and values of the 'proper Islamic way of living'. Although Khaled never preached for the MB or political Islam per se, he laid the foundation of cultural Islamisation of the middle class's youth (Olsson 2015).

The MB had long adopted a confrontation-avoidant stance with regards to the regime, believing that full Islamisation must occur before complete political power is obtained or else the group's reputation and function could be damaged, as could the possibility of achieving an Islamic state. However, this started to change since 2005 when the MB won historical 20% of the parliament's seats. Supported by the impending 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections, 2004/05 witnessed the initial phase of mobilisation. Just a year before, Egyptian oppositional forces began to take hold, demanding the cessation of the 1981 emergency law, condemning the Mubarak family across numerous areas, and insisting that multiple candidates be permitted to run for presidency. Therefore, the anti-regime rallies, which usually targeted only foreign policy with regards to Iraq and Palestine, became a thing of the past (Pioppi et al., 2011, pp. 48-49). The Egyptian opposition, with the advent of the pro-democracy's demands, appeared to solely focus on the regime's legitimacy itself as the main cause of its rejected policies including foreign policy. The MB, however, continued to distinguish itself from the mainstream radical discourse of the secular opposition. It held the stick from the middle. In an apparent demonstration of advocacy for Mubarak, MB's members were told to vote in the 2005 Presidential elections as they thought best (Aziz 2005). According to Pioppi et al. (2011, p. 50), it was suggested that the decision of the MB not to boycott the 2005 Presidential elections was rewarded by the Brotherhood's 20% (88-seat) win at the

parliamentary elections – the first of its kind of any opposition party and for an Islamist group. That indeed gave the MB, for the first time, an unprecedented de facto legitimacy. They became virtually accepted, by the regime above all else, as a legitimate political force.

The rise of the MB's legitimate presence in Egypt's political life, accompanied with its increasing reliance on the urban middle class, motivated the group to modernise its discourse. In 2007, the group declared, for the first time, that it is considering establishing a political party. *Al-Masry al-Youm*, the independent newspaper, later obtained the confidential program of the party. Although the program was widely criticised by both secular oppositional powers and, indeed, the regime's supporters for containing 'theocratic' articles like the one that advocates the supervision of Islamic clergy over legislation, it was indeed an early sign that the MB was attempting to appear more democratic to appeal for the new middle class's demand on democracy (Brown & Amr 2008). The MB's democratic transformation was met with skepticism in 2007, which marked the cessation of the MB's exploration of reform. It is likely that this was due to the struggle between two streams inside the MB: the reformists and conservatives, who argued that liberal democracy and Islam were two mismatched concepts (Tammam 2012, pp.21–24). The MB largely emphasised social justice and democracy topics over religious messages. The group insisted, numerous times, that its objective was to service as a voice for every individual in Egypt in order to ensure social, economic, political and other necessary reforms. It claimed that it does not aim to turn Egypt into an Islamic state (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 53).

This being said, it seems to be more likely that the MB had no intention or capacity for providing any detailed, specific program that addresses the controversial issues of freedoms especially freedom of women and of religions beliefs. The group kept its vagueness regarding its stances towards these issues, and left other opposition actors such as ElBaradei and *Kefaya* to speak on behalf of the opposition, including the MB, when it comes to these issues (Pioppi et al. 2011, p. 50). This policy of intended vagueness caused problems among the ranks of the opposition, especially for the skeptics of the MB's non-democratic, non-secular orientations. For example, in May 2010, ElBaradei told the French Magazine *Paris Match* that he managed to convince the MB to accept the secularity of the state (Bailly 2010). Indeed, a few days after ElBaradei's statements, the MB denied what has been said by ElBaradei, who had to attribute the issue to mistranslation by the magazine. This example is illustrative of the underestimation of the opposition leaders of the disagreements between them, which would cause further troubles after the uprising.

The MB continued to gain more ground, even within the state's security organisations. Mubarak's approach with the MB did not have a consensus among his security institutions. While

Mubarak's compromising approach was following Omar Suleiman's view to contain and coopt the MB rather than confronting them, other security institutions did not subscribe to this vision (Suleiman 2012). In 2015, President Sisi had reflected skeptically on Mubarak's conciliatory approach to the MB, believing it had allowed the organisation to build a sound base of popular support (Al-Masry Al-Youm 2015). Despite the ups and downs in the MB's relationship to the state, Mubarak had clearly avoided full repression of the group from the political scene. The MB continued to perform the role of the main opposition force during Mubarak's 30-years rule. Pioppi et al (2011) summarised the regime's approach as aiming, "to reduce and keep the Brotherhood's public space and political/social impact under control, not to get rid of it once and for all (p. 48).

However, the regime apparently felt threatened by the continuous rise of the MB. According to an officer in the State Security Apparatus (*Amn Al-Dawla*), it was Gamal Mubarak and Ahmed Ezz who decided, in 2007, to favour a confrontational approach (M.K. 2013). The MB's engagement in the 2008 municipal elections was prohibited and many of its members were arrested. At the same time, the MB was positioned as a Taliban and Nazi organisation in the domestic and international propaganda of the regime (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 50). Non-Egyptian audiences were told that owing to its spread rapid political liberalisation would result in an Islamic rather than democratic Egypt, a claim that the regime has been making for long time. Moreover, the MB's prominent finance and business actors worth approximately USD 4 billion USD were arrested at this time, causing the MB's major source of funding to run dry. The regime then made sure that the MB's 2005 win would not be replicated during the November 2010 parliamentary elections.

In 2010, the MB ignored Muhammad ElBaradei's insistence on a parliamentary election boycott, along with the leftist *Tagammu'* party and the liberal *Wafd* party. However, the outcome of the election was shocking to all political powers: no first-round seats were won by the MB, or almost any other secular groups, and the MB – along with the Wafd – decided to boycott second round of the election on the 5th of December (Pioppi et al., 2011, p. 50). During this period, there is evidence that the MB was preparing for the possible scenario of massive demonstrations. The MB measured the effectiveness of possible demonstrations based on the number of attendees it can mobilise. According to an active member of the MB at the time, the MB took the decision to participate in the January uprising after it made sure that its ability to mobilise demonstrators reached 250 demonstrators per hour; a number that was estimated to quadruple in case of wide popular unrest (S.E. 2013).

In sum, with the blockage in the relation between the MB and the regime after the 2010 parliamentary election, sufficient segments of the society; the SMC, the YMC, and the Islamists,

were mobilised against the regime. The umbrella under which the middle class's wrath had been represented was the 'democratic coalition', which is discussed in the following section.

6.2 Contentious Politics in the 2000s

Ever since 1952, the Egyptian consecutive regimes mastered the divide and rule tactic against the opposition. While Nasser created a wide alliance of workers, peasants and SMC that isolated the hardcore socialists and Islamists, Sadat employed Islamists to counterweight the previous Nasserist alliance. Mubarak, lacking a power base of his own, had to balance between all political and socioeconomic factions. He accommodated, as was stated in chapter 4, all political orientations in one wide centrist formula. However, with the rise of neoliberalism, the regime had to take sides. Its power base had narrowed and was consisted basically of the capitalist class, excluding the middle classes, the urban poor, the workers, and Nasserite, leftist and Islamist powers. However, it was not possible for these powers to ally, as the secular/Islamist divide was strongly present. As discussed in the first chapter, there is a deep-rooted identity contest in Egypt. The secular political powers often looked suspiciously at the Islamists (MB in particular) and often considered them anti-democracy groups that aim solely at applying the sharia law and establishing Islamist theocratic rule. On the other side, Islamists considered all non-Islamist powers to be Westernized, morally corrupt and elitist with no influence on the masses. To reach the point of Tahrir, the secular/Islamist gap had to be bridged. That was in progress during the 2000s through the movements of *Kefaya* (the Egyptian Movement for Change (Enough!)), and then the democratic coalition.

Over the 18-day period in Tahrir in January 2011, numerous societal sectors followed the 'democratic coalition', which was mainly led by the pro-democracy activists and the MB. The democratic coalition was the outgrowth of *Kefaya*, which was established in 2004 as a result of the collaboration of a significant number of civilian activists with strong professional backing. The *Kefaya* Campaign led the way at a time when Egypt had been experiencing the establishment of a number of civil society organizations that have orchestrated major protests and strikes. Due to its efforts, the number of documented protests rose from 202 in 2005 to 222 in 2006 and reached 617 in 2007; representing an enormous leap from the previous years (Osman, 2011, p. 148). It could be argued that, in spite of fractions between the MB and other secular powers, *Kefaya* was the main platform in which it was possible for the collaboration between these two powers to take place (Oweidat et al. 2008, p.11; Shorbagy 2007, pp.56–57).

After the 2005 parliamentary elections, the MB began to serve as the voice of outrage because the regime's failure to uphold human rights, its use of coercive force, the overlap between money and power, acts of corruption and the *tawreeth* project. These events had a knock-on effect, which saw the establishment of a heavily-focused campaign for the validation of the elections law by the Judges Club and encouragement for citizens to refuse to agree to being ruled. In Cairo, various rallies were also orchestrated by student activists, whilst the civic and Islamic feminist *Shayfenkom* (We Are Watching You) group was formed with the purpose of documenting the poor treatment of female protestors. It appeared that the country was standing on the very edge of change as the strength of Mubarak's regime began to falter.

During this period, the secular-Islamic collaboration is highly worthy of mentioning at this point. As Schwedler and Clark (2009) explained, whilst diverse political alliances were uncommon before the 1990s, the period leading up to the Arab uprisings witnessed Middle Eastern political figures, even those who had long been competitors, beginning to band together, with the alliances between liberals, socialists, communists, leftists and Islamists being amongst the most surprising. In Egypt, the demand for a new constitution and the expulsion of President Mubarak came about after the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections prompted inter-class, inter-region and inter-party collaboration. The alliance on this level between Islamists and non-Islamists was a situation that had never been seen before in contemporary Egypt, despite ideological alliances being relatively common over previous years. In many cases, it was difficult to identify the ideological orientations of each group due to the similarities in the nature of the protests in the 2000s. Alliances such as the MB's 1987 collaboration with the Labour Party, and the earlier alliance between the MB and the Wafd Party in 1984 were, in fact, primarily tactical (ibid.). However, this time, in the 2000s, all forces appeared to be unified in its struggle against the regime's policies, especially when it comes to the *tawreeth* project that was considered a red line for all opposition forces. In the words of one Egyptian scholar in 2007:

“there is far more common ground for political conciliation in today's Egypt than what we are led to believe by the regime or the Muslim Brotherhood. This interaction beyond ideological lines has been and remains a difficult yet steady work in progress. In the 1990s it took shape through the work on foreign policy issues. In the early 2000s it manifested itself in the Kefaya movement.”

Speculation over the MB's potential transition towards a stable, strategic alliance had occurred as a result of the emergence of an intertwined web of joint campaigns. This web included the

aforementioned *Kifaya*, and was underpinned by a diverse mix of liberal, Nasserist, Marxist and Islamist ideologies, and the 2002-established Anti-Globalization Egyptian Group, which attracted Islamist members in 2003. However, collaboration was relatively among low status members and avoided sensitive issues in order to maintain harmony. Egyptian political powers demonstrated an entrenched, increasing disillusionment with the political sphere through the high number of alliances formed between opposition parties of different ideological orientations. However, real breakthrough in the relation between Islamists and secular democrats took place with the return of Mohamed ElBaradei to Egypt in February 2010.

In 2009, ElBaradei, laureate of 2005 Nobel Prize, was preparing to retire his post as the Secretary General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). He began at the time reaching out to Egypt's youth to instill hope that political change was possible. He then announced his potential intent to run for the presidency in the 2011 Presidential elections. Gradually, ElBaradei became a major enemy of the regime (ElTantawy & Wiest 2011, p.1211). In February 2010, he came back to Egypt from Vienna, where thousands of youth and most of Egypt's political class from opposition received him in the airport as the 'hero' of change.

The National Association for Change (NAC) was declared in 2010 under the leadership of ElBaradei. It was a loose grouping of almost all opposition's political affiliations and powers in Egypt. The NAC declared its seven demands that created the basic platform of the January uprising. These included: ending the state of emergency; complete judicial oversight of the whole election process; allowing local and international civil society groups to monitor elections; equal access to media for all candidates, particularly during presidential elections; giving Egyptians living abroad the right to vote at Egyptian embassies and consulates; the right to run for president without arbitrary restrictions in accordance with Egypt's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as limiting the president's service to two terms; and voting by the National ID (Hussein 2010).

ElBaradei's fervor spread amongst the youth in the country. His Facebook's page gained thousands of new members every day. He started campaigning in Egyptian cities and villages calling for change and mobilising for the free elections and amending the constitution. In 4 June 2010, ElBaradei made a radical move when he visited the MB's headquarter and took photos with its leaders. The MB then started mobilising for gathering signatures on the 'seven demands' of change. In a few months, the number of signatories rose from a few thousands to almost a million. For the first time in the history of the Egyptian opposition, the Islamist and secular forces were united in their demands and the MB was legitimised with regard to wide segments of the secular middle class

and political forces due to ElBaradei's cooperation with them and his trust in the MB's democratic intentions (El-Hadi 2010; Mounir 2010; YouTube 2010).

The latter political contention was effectively channeled through the media. Indeed, after Nasser, there were changing sands in the influence of Arab media from Cairo to other centres in the Gulf. In the past, and when other Arab countries lagged behind in appreciating the authority of radio, Egypt had understood the importance of using the radio to distribute messages since Nasser's era (Dawisha 2003, p.149). In either case, the fact remained that whoever could control the Arabic microphone could control the Arabs' hearts and minds. In the 21st century it was Aljazeera Satellite Channel (JSC) (*Al-jazeera*)¹³, that was able since its establishment in 1996 to achieve supreme ideological hegemony in the Arab Street in general and in Egypt in particular as a result of stressing the correct elements in the Arab and Egyptian identity. As Shahin put it: "Through the "Voice of Arabs" broadcasting, Egypt was able to steer the Arab street in most Arab capitals towards its preferred policies. The revisionist powers in the Middle East, through *Al-Jazeera* TV, introduced another example during Lebanon and Gaza wars (Shahin 2010, pp.41–42). *Al-jazeera* continued its leading role in dominating the Arab sphere and became a platform for Arab democratisation's opposition groups, especially during the 18 days of Tahrir in Egypt where it played a significant role in mobilising demonstrators and providing them with real-time updates. Indeed, one of the main backgrounds of the January uprising in 2011 was the sweeping pre-eminence of the opposition's media, especially over the state's media, which was in most cases traditional, old-fashioned and unable to attract the minds and hearts of the new middle class's youth. The decline in the state's ideological apparatus was combined with a decline in the state's political purchasing power as was shown in the previous chapters.

Indeed, the time was ripe for Egypt to revolt: all opposition was united, thousands of young men and women from the YMC were charged with anger over the death of Khaled Said, and civilian, internationally-recognised leadership was present represented by ElBaradei. Simply put, regime legitimacy was lost, and alternative legitimacy with alternative leadership was present. Wael Ghoneim set fire among the youth of the YMC in 14th of January 2011 when he wrote a post on We Are All Khaled Said's Facebook page asking the youth "Today is 15... The Police Day is on the 25th... It is a public holiday... If 100,000 of us took to the streets, no one can stand against us... Can

¹³ Aljazeera is a Doha-based state-funded broadcaster owned by the Al Jazeera Media Network, which is partly funded by the House of Thani, the ruling family of Qatar. Initially launched as an Arabic news and current affairs satellite TV channel, Al Jazeera has since expanded into a network with several outlets, including the Internet and specialty TV channels in multiple languages (Toumi 2011). See Powers (2009) for an analysis on how the Al Jazeera Network helped to foster the rise of a microstate, Qatar, into a regional geopolitical force.

we?” (Ghoneim 2011b). The invitation of Wael Ghoneim exploded in the Egyptian Facebook. Thousands of young men and women responded positively and started mobilising among their families and acquaintances. The MB went to the back seats to keep the secular, liberal façade of the uprising. However, they were determined on participating if the 25th witnessed the participation of high number of people (S.E. 2013). On 25th of January, thousands of young men and women took to the street to the first time under Mubarak. On 28th of January, millions of Egyptians, from all walks of life and all classes of the society joined the revolutionary forefront and completely destroyed the police forces in a battle that continued around 6 hours. Most of Egypt’s prisons were attacked, mainly by the urban poor who had relatives inside these prisons, while other prisons were attacked by Hamas and Hezbollah members to free their jailed members there. Mubarak asked the army to take to the streets to control the situation. On 11th of February, Mubarak had to step down, responding to the severe pressures.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter elaborated on the societal role in the legitimacy building/loss process. Thus the first section of this chapter discussed the middle class with its different wings and how they perceived legitimacy and why they revolted against Mubarak, while the second and third sections discussed how the middle class fought politically against the Mubarak regime in the 2000s and how it organised an uprising in January 2011. In these discussions, the chapter attempted to offer answers to the following questions: why did the uprising happen and succeed in overthrowing Mubarak? What was different this time? How all these numbers got mobilised and why they were able to stand in face of the strong security forces?

As discussed, the Mubarak years witnessed augmentation of the size of the middle class and its percentage in the society. The fast growth of the middle class caused unprecedented social mobility and effervescence. Furthermore, for the first time, all wings of the middle class, which is supposedly the regime’s most important power base, were unified against the regime. Some parts of the middle class, like the YMC and the IMC led the uprising, while other sectors, like the SMC went passive in their support of the regime and refrained from defending it. Each segment of the middle class had its own reasons to consider the regime void of legitimacy. While the SMC delegitimised the regime because of its perceived corruption and neoliberalisation of the economy, the youth of the new middle class delegitimised the regime on more political grounds; i.e. lack of democracy and disrespect for human rights, while the Islamists was distributed along the latter two

branches, in addition to their quest for applying the sharia law in Egypt.

This chapter also illustrated how the YMC, who led the uprising, employed different techniques of protesting based on their mastery over social media. The regime's security forces were complete aliens to these techniques and rather used to and implemented old-fashioned methods that proved to be even more counter-effective. The speed through which instructions, news, arrangements and coordination between was transferring among revolutionary youth was far ahead of the police's ability to keep pace with it. The shown courage of the middle class's youth in facing the regime's security forces, and the novelty and creativity of their techniques, inspired vast segments of the population either to actively join the uprising or at least refrain from defending the regime.

The chapter also highlighted that not only was the MB for the first time able to participate with its full capacity in any large-scale protest against the regime since 1952, but was also widely accepted. That was possible this time because the MB was able to hide behind the youth of the middle class, who were portrayed as revolutionary moral characters, which granted them a distinguished leverage and immunity that they were able to bestow on all who would join them in the uprising, including the MB. The MB's effective participation was crucial as they were the only organised power able to mobilise large numbers of people especially from the lower classes and the urban poor, over which they have influence. That was central in attacking and destroying the police capacity in the 18 days of the uprising.

Furthermore, Mohamed ElBaradei, whose profile and role was examined in this chapter, offered most-needed political leadership and internationally-accepted face which perfectly formed the regime anti-thesis. One of the reasons why political uprisings were not hitherto possible under Mubarak was the absence of any reasonable, feasible alternatives, for the regime consistently displaced all potential alternatives; i.e. Abou Ghazala, Amr Moussa, Kamal ElGanzoury and Ahmed Gowily. This time, ElBaradei constituted an acceptable figure that reduced the fear of change and made it more feasible.

Finally, the role of the army and the nature of its power politics with Mubarak during the uprising was examined. The army's stance was obviously biased to the 'popular will' and did not exert any efforts in protecting the Mubarak regime. The high institutional legitimacy that army enjoys apart from the regime itself, made it possible for the army to not only survive the uprising (which is supposedly against the regime of which the army is part), but for revolutionary powers to ask it to oversee the new democratic transition, which is the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter Seven

The Vacuum of Legitimacy

Post-Uprising Egypt

7.1 Introduction

After the end of the 18 days uprising, the youth of the new middle class (*noshataa*) who claimed their ownership of the revolution, the MB as the organisation that offered the most vital contribution to the revolution, and the army whose support to the uprising was the push in convincing Mubarak to quit, being the very three powers that toppled the regime; went through a struggle for both power and legitimacy. In post-uprising Egypt, the discourse of democracy, indeed, prevailed over all other discourses. There was an apparent consensus on the primacy of establishing a democratic system as the major source of legitimacy for the post-January state. This consensus was manifested in the initial declarations of the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF), which inherited power from Mubarak. In the first declaration after Mubarak's step down, the SCAF appeared to have understood the essence of the required change. It stated that "the council [SCAF] is not a substitute for the legitimacy that the people would accept" (YouTube 2011a). In the latter declarations, the SCAF made it clear that it saw the rule of law as the only basis for legitimacy, committing itself to achieving a peaceful transfer of power to an elected civilian authority within a free democratic regime (YouTube 2011b). The SCAF was accepted by the revolutionary powers as the nominal guardian of the revolution's procession to democracy (Ashour, 2015). However, it was natural that the three powers would have their own fight after ousting Mubarak. The main goal of each of these powers was to win the battle of 'hearts and minds' of the people, and exercise dominance over the society. This chapter will discuss the interactive environment created between all these parties. Its main argument is that the army managed to contain the uprising and established a new formula of 'negative legitimacy' as will be explained later. The former formula of legitimacy under which Nasser, and to a lesser extent Sadat and Mubarak, ruled, was a simple trade of granting the people welfarist privilege and claims to ideological rightness in return for their political obedience. After five years from the January uprising, the formula now became granting the people security, in terms of avoiding the destiny of other Arab countries such as Libya, Syria, Yemen and Iraq, which fell into chaos, civil war or terrorism, in return for their political consent.

The chapter is thus divided into three sections. The first section explains how Egypt transferred from seeking to build a new democratic legitimacy to a contest over identity (thus bringing ideological legitimacy back to the forefront). The second section explains how the contest over identity escalated to a quasi-civil war, leading, as the third section analyses, to the new formula of accepting authoritarian rule in return for security.

7.2 Bringing ideological legitimacy back in: from consensus on democracy to contest over identity

With the opposition factions unified and determined to continue the revolution and establishing a truly democratic system, the army's position in politics and the economy alike would have been negatively affected. Indeed, as the core of the state, the army's first task was to restore peace and stability to the raging street; a task only the most organised power in the society, the MB, can help achieve. Thus, the SCAF arguably aimed at dismantling the revolutionary alliance (between the MB and the *noshataa*) to isolate each power apart from the other. It did so through investing in the secular/Islamist polarisation to reduce the demand for democratic legitimacy, of which the army does not have sufficient reserve, to the favour of ideational legitimacy, of which the army has sufficient reserve as the guardian of Egyptian nationalism as it will introduce itself to the public.

7.2.1 Revolutionaries Vs. Conservatives

The SCAF aimed to dismantle the revolutionary alliance between the *noshataa* (revolutionary youth) and the MB. As this alliance was the main social force behind the uprising against Mubarak, it was necessary for the army to lower the expectations of this alliance, and restricting it to accepting that the revolution's goals have been fully achieved by ousting Mubarak. This was indeed contradictory to the revolutionary youth's vision and desired radical transformation of power relations in Egypt.

The *noshataa*'s vision of change was inspired by their Godfather Mohamed ElBaradei's call: *Addostour Awallan* (The Constitution First) (M. Soliman 2011; Dunne 2011). This meant that a new constitution had to be written first and then Presidential and parliamentary elections could take place afterwards. They believed that the principles and aims of the *thawra* (the revolution) should be instilled within a completely original constitution. They argued that the January uprising had erupted not against Mubarak per se but against the whole set of power relations that prevailed since 1952.

These power relations, their logic follows, had its highest manifestation in the 1971 constitution. Without drafting, firstly, a new, modern and democratic constitution that reflects the spirit and objectives of the revolution, the youth and revolutionary powers thought that the same old regime would reproduce itself even using new faces and entities. For them, the 1971 constitution was out of date, authoritarian and patriarchal and could not be amended; it needed to be replaced altogether. Its second article, for example, was controversial to say the least. It stated that the religion of the state is Islam and the prime source of legislation is the Islamic sharia law. Other articles in the constitution posed electoral constraints on independent candidates for the favour of organised political parties, which indeed was not in favour of the revolutionary youth who were politically unorganised and lack sufficient funds and expertise to establish political parties.

However, the SCAF had a different view. It showed its carrots to the MB to entice the group into allying with the army rather than continuing the revolution with the youth. The Army and the MB have often had a problematic relationship. Although Nasser, in 1952, had good relations with the group, to the extent it was argued that he was an active member of it (Helbawy 2010; Mitchell 1993, pp.96–104), he cracked down on the MB in 1954 and dismantled its organisation. Under Mubarak, the army was perceived by the MB to have lost its pawns and could no longer pose a threat to the MB's political inspirations (S.E. 2013). After 2011, it could be argued that the MB thought the army is unwilling and/or unable to have any political ambitions. Thus, the MB welcomed the collaboration with the army responded positively to its endeavors of amending the constitution rather than writing a new one, to the detriment of the revolutionary youth. The MB, understandingly, had a stake in keeping the existing old structures of the state knowing that they would have a comparative advantage in elections that other opposition forces do not have. Thus, only a couple of months after the uprising, many of the revolution's youth and secular opposition were suspicious that the SCAF and MB were implementing a plan which neglected writing a new, democratic constitution for the sake of amending the infamous 1971 constitution and thus opting to conduct rapid elections which would benefit the prolific, widespread and well-organised MB (Dunne 2015).

Thus, the SCAF appointed a constitutional committee, including the MB senior member Sobhy Saleh, to amend the 1971 constitution (Ashour, 2011, p.12). Writing in the daily broadsheet *Al-Shark Al-Awsat*, on the same day as the plebiscite regarding constitutional changes on 19th March 2011, the Egyptian scholar Ma'moun Fandi (2011) posed the question of whether the MB was collaborating with the SCAF. For such a controversial point to be raised at that time showed early on the problem faced those pushing for democracy. The secularists' suspicions of the MB,

their ally only two months ago, rose high. However, the MB and SCAF campaigned with their full weight for the changes to the constitution of 1971, while the revolution's leftist and secularist supporters rejected the changes (Amar 2011). For the first time also since January uprising, the Salafists¹⁴ joined the domestic political arena. In what appeared as a concerted raid on the media, Salafi figures, including ex-terrorists who were released from prisons right after the uprising, swept the TV talk shows, most known of being loyal to the security apparatuses. With the SCAF's propaganda in the state TV and its moral reserve at the side of many Egyptians, the MB's well-organised social webs, and the Salafis' domination over many mosques all over Egypt, it was expected for constitutional amendments to pass. The Salafis, who had no political experience and only a call to implement the Sharia law, were inclined to ally with the army and the MB, as conservative powers, rather than collaborating with the 'secular' revolutionary youth.

As it happened, 77% of voters backed changes to the constitution of 1971. These results could be argued to be the first reality shock for the revolutionary youth. They expected their weight in the society and their ability to mobilise votes against the constitutional amendments to be indeed higher than the 23% of votes that they gained. For them, that reflected a large majority for the traditionalists of the SCAF, MB and remaining members of Mubarak's cabal- the *fulul*. They realised, then, that they have more of revolutionary power—that is the ability to mobilise demonstrations, framing inspiring discourses—than organisational, political power—that is the ability to win elections. This theme would be repetitive in the Egyptian politics up to date.

Surprisingly, the SCAF did not amend the constitution. It rather issued a new constitutional declaration that included the items in 1971 constitution that was approved for amendment in the referendum. A step that most of the revolutionary elites disapproved and considered it an attempt to reproduce the ancien régime (Shahin 2011). Again, the MB and Islamists, keen at accelerating the process to reach the point of the parliamentary and presidential elections, with great confidence they would have the most capacity to win, supported the SCAF and widened the gap between themselves and the thawra camp (Ashour, 2015).

7.2.2 Seculars Vs. Islamists

The time was ripe for the SCAF to invest in the already existing Islamist/Secular polarisation. As it

¹⁴ Salafis are fundamentalists who believe in a return to the original ways of Islam. The word 'Salafi' comes from the Arabic phrase, '*as-salaf as-salih*', which refers to the first three generations of Muslims (starting with the Companions of the Prophet), otherwise known as the Pious Predecessors.

was earlier shown in this thesis, the Islamist/Secularist polarisation has always been present in the Egyptian politics. Ever since the establishment of the MB in 1928, Islamists considered themselves to be a distinguishable block that is intrinsically different than the rest of the society. Similarly, most secular opposition powers considered the regime, which was mainly secular most of the times, as closer to them more than their fellow Islamic opposition figures. The 18 days of the uprising was the first striking exception to this equation. Secular and Islamist youth from the two genders stayed together in Tahrir Square, creating some sort of Utopia. The MB was keen not to raise any Islamist demands or even show any loud symbols of religiosity. The direct experience of thousands of youth (mainly from urban middle classes) in the *midan* (square) made them ready to believe that the MB has been already democratised and post-Islamist, as Asef Bayat coined the term (Bayat 2013).

However, the youth were shocked by the MB post-uprising's rather pragmatic behaviour in collaborating with the SCAF to achieve mere MB's interests. Simultaneously, the increasing emergence of the Salafis in the political and social life started to alert the secular elites of the middle class. Unsurprisingly, this Salafi surge in the media was in a way inspired by the SCAF itself: "we did not order any TV show to host the Salafi and Jihadi leaders, they [the TV producers] asked us if they can do so and we said it is a democracy now, do whatever you wish!" (S.A 2013). The rise of political Islam and particularly Salafism reached its peak in what has been known as the 'Kandahar' demonstration on 29th July 2011, the first Islamist mass protests in the heart of Cairo's Tahrir Square (Shadid 2011). For the first time since the January uprising, Salafists loudly declared their conception of legitimacy. They publicly demanded the full application of the Sharia law and establishing an Islamic state. Their notion of legitimacy was backed by large segments of the Egyptian society in lower urban and rural classes. The images of the Tahrir Square, full of Islamists with their distinguishable costumes, beards and niqab for women, shocked the liberal secular youth who for long time had an idealist conception of the future of Egypt. "In that day", said one of 'shabab el-thawra' (the revolutionary youth), "we realised that we were not alone. There were 'alien' people who claimed that our *thawra* was theirs. They were there and they were dangerous. They wanted no democracy or liberalism. They wanted darkness" (Ismail 2013).

Counter to the MB whose base of support was positioned in the middle class, the Salafis' base of power lied largely in the lower urban and rural classes (Marks 2012, p.18). They not only had Islamist dogmas, but also radically different life style and looks. These differences, albeit might appear insignificant, had, and will continue to have, a major impact on the urban Egyptian middle class. It indeed awakened a sort of class-consciousness that was not often apparent. The appearance of thousands and thousands of lower-class people, rural poor men and women, whom were packed

in buses to participate in the demonstrations, created waves of shocks in the urban revolutionary middle class society. A sense of class-tension was unmistakable. In the words of a depoliticised upper-middle class lady, who participated in the uprising to the extent of hiding youth trying to escape the police in her own apartment in Tahrir Square:

“I admit that I was shocked by what happened after January. We [revolutionary camp] have not seen this Egypt in January. I have been always sympathetic with the poor. However, I have to say that I was saddened with the change of my home cleaner’s behaviour after the victory of Islamists in the parliamentary elections. She was wearing a niqab as a social custom although she was not that religious. Her attitude with me appeared different and her tone was sharper. She was very enthusiastic for Salafi, and to lesser degrees, Ikhwani, political figures and said that they would bring true Islam to Egypt and will bring the rights of the poor from the infidel rich. I have known this woman for more than 10 years and never crossed my mind that she thought like this. I was frightened from the possibility of Islamists sweeping our lives and the likes of my home cleaner come to revenge for things that we did not commit” (Saleh 2013).

Consequently, the SCAF gained a rising leverage as seculars and liberals started to see it as the “saviour of the modern state”. The SCAF affirmed that image by officially declaring that “the civil state is an issue of national security” (Mesallam 2011). In November 2011, building on the growing Islamist/secularist tension, the army attempted to bolster its role as the supreme arbiter of the state, by issuing what has been known as the Selmi Document (*Watheeqet El-Selmi*) (Sabry 2011). Ali El-Selmi was the Vice Prime Minister in Essam Sharaf’s government and he prepared a proposed supra-constitutional document to ensure the secularity¹⁵ of the state. Although the idea of the supra-constitutional document was originally ElBaradei’s idea, the secular revolutionary camp refused *Watheeqet El-Selmi* as it also contained other articles that gave the army the position of ‘a state within a state’. The Selmi document, besides the secular articles, stipulated that the army’s budget remains out of parliamentary oversight. The MB and Salafis also naturally rejected the Selmi document and considered it against both the sharia and the democratic future of Egypt. The MB organised a mass demonstration in Tahrir Square on 18th November 2011 to refuse the Document. On the next day, violence erupted between the revolutionary youth and the police and army forces,

¹⁵ In Egypt, all parties refer to the concept of ‘secular’ state as the ‘civil’ state, as a way to avoid the controversy over the word ‘secularism’ which the mainstream political Islamist discourse attached it in the conservative Muslim mind with infidelity.

creating the bloody Mohamed Mahmoud events where tens of young men were killed (BBC 2012d). To ease tensions, the SCAF had to decide a date, June 2012, for the first Presidential elections post-uprising.

The Mohamed Mahmoud Events was crucial as it crashed the relationship between the revolutionary youth and the MB as the youth considered the MB to abandon them because of the parliamentary elections, and between the revolutionary youth and the SCAF as well, as they considered that the army was killing them on purpose. Simultaneously, the honeymoon between the SCAF and the MB came to an end and their level of cooperation declined. That was arguably the reason why the MB competed for nearly all seats in the parliamentary election that were held a few days after Mohamed Mahmoud Events, contrary to their former pledges of '*mosharaka la moghalaba*' (participation not domination).

The sweeping Islamist victory in the first parliamentary election post-uprising, which was conducted by the end of 2011, made it clear to all political powers that only Islamists (MB and Salafis combined) have a majority that could enable them to rule, unilaterally. The MB's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) reaped 43.7% of the parliament seats, while the Salafis' Nour party harvested 22% of total seats. The biggest three secular/liberal parties; namely the Wafd party, the Free Egyptian party, and the Egyptian Democratic Social party, gained together only 13.77% of total seats. The Revolution Continues Alliance (*Al-Thawra Mostamerra*), which included most of the *noshataa* class who led the January uprising, acquired 1.57% of the parliament's seats. Heated debates within the revolution camp erupted around whether this parliament should be considered the revolution's democratic parliament or it is merely an Islamist parliament that puts the first stone in establishing a theocratic Islamist state which will be, by definition, undemocratic indeed.

The performances of many of the Islamist members of parliament (MPs), mainly from the Salafi bloc, only came to widen the gap between Islamists and secularists. Some of these performances were indeed lamentable and made a mockery of Egypt's first freely elected parliament. For example, some of the Salafi figures refused to stand in greeting to the national anthem, creating a wave of critiques for Islamist non-believers in the concept of *watan* (homeland) and hence traitors. Indeed, these claims were investing in a long history of accusing Islamists as anti-patriotic who wish to demolish the modern nation-state in order to establish *dawlet el-khilafah* (the Caliphate state) instead. Additionally, some other Salafi MPs sought for granting an Islamic flavour on the parliament through calling for prayers (*azan*) within the parliamentary sessions and imposing sharia laws. The secular press, some under deep-state's control and other seeking merely more online traffic and readership, started to circulate exaggerated, scary stories about Salafis and

their intentions to Islamise Egypt. Indeed, Salafis wanted to Islamise Egypt and they were clear about that. However, most of the news was not accurate. For example, one of the Salafi clerics, Yasser Borhamy, stated in the TV that allowing girls less than 9 years old to get married should not be banned which was the case according to the ‘secular’ laws that were put in place under Mubarak. The press circulated this news as that the Nour Party (the Salafi biggest party) was preparing a legislation to allow female children less than 9 years to get married. Indeed, with the intensity of this line, the divide between Islamists and secularists continued to grow.

The parliament’s most important task was to appoint a Constituent Assembly (CA) to draft Egypt’s new constitution. The establishment of the CA created intense tension in the country as most non-Islamist opposition powers thought the formation of the CA was unbalanced and in the favour of Islamists. The secular powers accused the Islamists to have been planning to monopolise all powers and write an Islamist constitution in their pursuit of establishing a theocratic, Islamist state. Consequently, most political powers embraced Mohamed ElBaradei’s and Hamdeen Sabbahi’s calls for a boycott of the CA. Additionally, a number of activists, public figures and politicians announced that they would not recognise the constitution that is being written by the CA and instead called to draft a constitution that is built upon popular consensus. However, the MB gave deaf ears to the calls of these political figures and considered that they refuse democracy when it does not lead to their victory.

Amidst this severely polarised atmosphere between revolutionaries/conservatives and Islamists/secularists, the first free presidential election was conducted starting from May 2012. Opposing to the best judgment of many moderate Islamists, including Rached Al-Ghanoushi of Tunisia, the MB decided to run for the presidency (Ramadan & Abdelrahman 2014). Their decision only came to confirm to their old allies that they were bluffing when confirmed more than once that they were not running for presidency, to the extent that the group expelled Abdel Moneim Abo El-Fotouh when he decided to run for the presidency, arguing that he breached the group’s consensus on not offering a presidential candidate in the first election post-January so that they do not terrify their allies in the *thawra* camp. The MB’s decision only recalled to minds their former commitment not to win a majority in the parliament, through running for less than 50% of seats, which was also breached when they presented candidates on almost all electoral constituencies. For all liberal/secular/revolutionary groups, the MB was thereafter considered an untrustworthy faction that frantically seeks new totalitarianism instead of sharing power.

The map of candidates in the election represented all political forces in Egypt. Although Mohamed ElBaradei represented the idealist utopian revolutionary youth in Egypt, he however

decided not to run for the presidential elections, deeming it democratic only on the outer appearance not in its essence (CNN 2013). Thus Hamdeen Sabahi represented the *thawra* camp as well as his original constituency; the Nasserites. Mohamed Morsi represented the MB. Abdel Moneim Abou ElFotouh represented the Salafis and a segment of what could be called liberal Islamists. Amr Moussa represented the model of a statesman who is preferred by the more reformist segments of the middle class. Finally, Ahmed Shafik represented the most conservative segments of the middle class and the *fulul* who considered the January uprising to be a mere international conspiracy against Egypt and wanted to restore the ancient regime, now through democratic elections. It is noteworthy to mention that Shafiq was not the candidate of the SCAF. He was the candidate of the political wing of Mubarak's regime. In the absence of an outright representative of the army in the elections, the Shafik campaign's smart tactics, which relied heavily on assistance from the old webs of the former ruling NDP, succeeded in mobilising millions of Egyptians, whether in urban cities or in the countryside, under the slogan of protecting the Egyptian national identity from the Islamist danger.

It is worthy to mention the role of the so-called deep state at this point. The deep state, *derin devlet* in Turkish language, is a term refers to influential anti-democratic coalitions within the Turkish political system, composed of high-level elements within the intelligence services (domestic and foreign), Turkish military, security, judiciary, and other social forces allied with it. In Egypt, there was no evidence of the existence of such a deep state when Mubarak was in power. However, with the collapse of the Mubarak regime in February 2011, the accompanying collapse of the Ministry of Interior, the disbanding of *Amn Al-Dawla* (the State Security Investigation Service), the frontal attack on the state's institution, and eventually, the rise of Islamists that reached its peak with the state's most important rival, the MB, winning the presidency in June 2012, many influential elements within the state's security and military institutions went on alert. It could be argued that the first political figure that attempted to consolidate what will be known later in Egypt as the deep state was Ahmed Shafiq, the presidential candidate in 2012 presidential election and the former Prime Minister of Egypt. According to sources in the Shafiq presidential campaign, several ex-members of *Amn Al-Dawla*, elements in the judiciary, and others in different security services, were advisors to Shafiq. "They offered useful information on the MB and other competitors in the presidential election," a senior member in Shafiq's campaign stated, "information on the electoral map of Egypt and connections to the traditional social and familial powers especially in the rural areas of Egypt and to influential media figures as well" (A. 2013). They were motivated, according to the previous source, by the belief that the SCAF was too lenient on the MB and it was risking their very own existence with the possibility of the MB reaching the presidency.

However, the elections results were reflective of the political distribution of power in post-Mubarak Egypt. In the first round, the MB's candidate, Mohamed Morsi, won 24.7% of the total votes, while the *fulul's* candidate, Ahmed Shafiq, won 23.6% of votes, taking them both to the runoff in June 2012. Hamdeen Sabahi gained 20.72% of votes, while Abou ElFotouh acquired 17.47% of total votes. In the runoff, the revolutionary youth bestowed their moral support to Mohamed Morsi. They considered him, despite the ideological differences discussed earlier, closer to be the revolution's candidate as they found the idea of Ahmed Shafiq's winning would mean a total and final defeat of their revolution. However, due to the growing antagonism between the *thawra* camp and Islamists, they decided to implicitly support Morsi. They launched a rather influential campaign on social media under the theme: *Oosor lamouna!* (literally means: 'squeeze a lemon!'; an Egyptian slang expression means 'a bitter pill to swallow'). During the election, the MB employed a two-leveled discourse. The first one addressed the *thawra* camp to boost its democratic legitimacy in their eyes as the only power that could achieve Egypt's democratic transition. In the famous Fairmont's meeting in Cairo, Morsi pledged to a plethora of revolutionary figures that he would work on achieving democracy and nothing else (Khorshid 2013; Ikhwan Web 2012; Shukrallah 2013b). Meanwhile, Khairat ElShater, the strong MB leader, pledged to Salafis, who controlled a significant share of Islamist votes, that Sharia law would be applied if Morsi won over in the election (Kroum 2012; YouTube 2012a). The runoff was conducted and Mohamed Morsi gained 51.73% of total votes while his competitor, Shafiq, obtained 48.27% of the aggregate votes. Thus, Mohamed Morsi of the MB became the first 'democratically' elected President for Egypt in its modern history.

7.3 The road to negative legitimacy: from contest over identity to quasi-civil war

The SCAF, traditionally not engaged in domestic politics until January 2011, was considering its options to deal with their new Supreme Leader; the senior MB member and now the President of the republic, Mohamed Morsi. With an *Ikhwani* president on the top of the state, the SCAF desired to undermine the power invested in the position. A few days before the runoff, in which Morsi had significant chance of winning, a SCAF decision dissolved the parliament following a ruling from the Supreme Constitutional Court that the electoral law was unconstitutional (BBC 2012a). The disbanding's decision was taken just a few days after the parliament appointed the CA, which was boycotted by several political powers in the country. Because of this discord, most revolutionary and secular powers cheered the disbanding of the parliament when it happened (Ashour 2015, p.13). Also, because the winner of the majority in the now-dissolved parliament, the MB, had also won

the presidency a few days later, it did not mobilise its supporters against the dissolution of the parliament. However, Morsi, once became President, decided to reinstall the dissolved parliament. The SCAF, eager to assert its position as the supreme-arbiter of the state, rebuffed Morsi's decision and convened an urgent SCAF meeting without the new Supreme Leader of the Armed Forces (BBC 2012c). Morsi had to back off and the parliament did not return, but the CA, which was not included in the dissolving of the parliament as a separate legal entity, continued its work amidst severe resistance from secular powers. Accordingly, a number of revolutionary groups and individuals withdrew from the CA, including numerous church representatives, the Wafd Party, the founder of the April 6 Youth Movement Ahmed Maher, and the Amr Moussa. It was reported that there were 40 withdrawals overall from the CA's 100 members (Gaweesh 2012; BBC 2012b; Alarabiya 2012a). However, the CA replaced the withdrawing individuals with alternatives and continued its consultations to draft the new constitution.

Simultaneously, on 6th of August 2012, Morsi was handed an opportunity to move against the deep-state, which he and the MB accused of acting against the revolution. Militants of the terrorist group *Ansar Bait al-Maqdis* murdered sixteen soldiers in Sinai, causing rage in the Egyptian street which was furious for the rising terrorism in the Sinai, and calling for revenge. A day after the terrorist attack, the Director of the General Intelligence Service (GIS) Murad Mowafi announced that the GIS has informed the presidency about a possible attack on the troops in Sinai. The presidency, through the legal advisor of the President denied the GIS director's declaration. Feeling that the 'deep-state' was attempting to point fingers at him, Morsi decided to strike first. On the 12th of August, he removed many of the strongest officers in the military and security apparatuses. Field Marshall Tantawy the head of the SCAF, General Sami Anan his deputy, Mohsen Murad of the Cairo Security Directorate, head of the Presidential Guard Muhammad Nagib Abdel-Salam, head of Central Security Forces Emad Al-Wakil, Hamdy Badin of the Military Police and Murad Mowafi of the General Intelligence Apparatus, all lost their positions, in addition to several other senior military leaders (Ashour 2015, p.13). Morsi also named the new Minister of Defence as General Abdel Fatah El-Sisi (Al-Sinawwy 2012), the Military Intelligence Director since 2008. However, Morsi's confident moves against the SCAF troubled many established political groups in Egypt, such as the military, Mubarak loyalists and the judiciary (Ashour 2015, p.14). The discourse that the MB seeks a power monopoly acquired new ground.

Indeed, there was an overarching sense of suspicion building among all political parties on one side and Islamists on the other side. Rifts were growing in the CA over amendments backed by Salafist groups, while Islamist rhetoric was dividing the political sphere and disconcerting some.

There was also tension over the number of Mubarak regime figures who were nominated to the cabinet. Morsi's November 2012 Constitutional Declaration were decisive in permanently revealing the dominant face of the MB and cutting all cordial ties between them and other revolutionary forces (Youssef 2012; Al-Masry 2012; Fandi 2012). The democratic transition seemed to be threatened by the Presidency's expanded authority. Much of the political opposition, the military and high-level departmental officials were suspicious of the Declaration. Morsi's declaration sought to bring Mubarak-era security officers back to trial; safeguard the state bodies in which the MB dominated from being disbanded by the old regime-dominated Supreme Constitutional Court; dismiss the old regime public prosecutor, as well as begin the process of awarding damages to those subject to cruel and inhumane treatment in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period. However, the declaration also included an item that was considered unprecedented in Egypt's constitutional history. It gave the President's decisions immunity from all kind of courts. Soon, anti-Morsi demonstrations erupted in Cairo amidst full media attack of the 'new dictatorship' of the MB (Youssef 2012). One Egyptian columnist even wrote in the *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* newspaper asking: Is it the end of the MB? (Fandi 2012).

As a consequence of Morsi's Constitutional Declaration, many of his sympathisers (lemon squeezers) among the revolutionary groups were alienated. To have a powerful presidency with wide ranging control was anathema to many of those pushing for democratic change, while the general suspicion among various political groups and parties exacerbated the opposition to Morsi's moves. The relationship between President Morsi and political rivals was characterised as a zero-sum game, whereby an absolute gain for one was considered to be an outright defeat for the other (Ashour, 2015, p.14). The ex-Minister of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Muhammad Mahsoob, a moderate Islamist, stated at the time that while it was essential for the Supreme Constitutional Court to be de-politicised, to prevent it hindering the policies of democratically accountable bodies, Morsi's approach was heavy-handed (Ashour, 2015, p.14). Even Morsi's Vice-President, Mahmoud Mekki, was not aware of the Constitutional Declaration (RT 2012). It was widely believed that the Constitutional Declaration was dictated directly from the MB's Guidance Office (El-Beialy 2015; Awadein & Hossam 2014). Resultantly, Morsi found himself opposed by a wider array of revolution supporting groups, especially the young, and also opposed by the *fulul* consisting of pro-Mubarak and counter-revolutionary forces. The charge consistently levelled at Morsi was that he was being controlled by the MB (El-Adawy 2012; Hassanein 2013). There was a widespread belief in political circles that the MB was expanding its control across all aspects of the state, intending to gain control and islamise the state (*Akhwanat Addawla*) (Brown 2013, p.5). Following on from the Constitutional

Declaration, the Presidential Palace area was the centre of opposition violence acts, while wider Cairo saw angry protests and unrest.

Demonstrations erupted in front of *Ittihadiya* Presidential Palace against the constitutional declaration. Using the tension between the MB and the opposition to enhance their position, the police and military were able to outmaneuver Morsi. The military posited itself as an influential mediator, while Mohamed ElBaradei, the Godfather of the revolutionary youth, even opted to speak to the new Defence Minister Sisi bypassing the President and granting legitimacy to the army as the only power capable of balancing the MB. ElBaradei also alluded to the military possibly being used to quell unrest following Morsi's Constitutional Declaration (Zeneldin 2013). The police had also exerted pressure on the President. The Central Security Forces were completely absent from the defence of the *Ittihadiya*, Egypt's Presidential residence in December 2012, when protesters used a crane to try and storm the gates, while throwing petrol bombs. Even the Minister of Interior, Ahmed Gamal Al-Din, requested that Morsi assent to the demonstrators, only after which he would release his troops to defend Morsi's residence (Ashour, 2015, p.14-15). Indeed, Morsi was confronted with a rebellion within the security forces, beginning with the police. During the attack on the Presidential palace, where Morsi's family were also residing, elements of the security forces seemed to be on the verge of joining the protesters. Even a high ranking policeman shouted towards the palace that Morsi was no such man to be President, suggesting he would soon be imprisoned (Ashour, 2015, p.15).

The response of the MB was to send its own youth to protect the President. As expected, wide clashes happened between the old friends-now adversaries the revolutionary youth and the MB youth during the two days of 5 & 6 December 2012. The MB youth, well-trained and more aggressive, easily out-powered the civilian youth and captured hundreds of them in front of the Presidential Palace. They created what has been called "Torture Chambers". In these rooms, right in front of the palace, dozens of *shabab al-thawra*, including some famous *noshataa*, were tortured in an inhumane way (Kirkpatrick 2012; Al-Masry Al-Youm 2012; Shukrallah 2013a). At least 10 were killed and hundreds wounded, creating, for the first time, the same cycle of vendetta between the MB and the revolutionary youth just like the one created earlier between the January uprising and the Mubarak regime and the SCAF afterwards.

Simultaneously, the CA finished drafting the constitution and put it to popular vote. Although Morsi took pride in completing the constitution, presenting it to the people as a democratic victory and an ascending step towards achieving the revolutionary demands, it was largely perceived by nearly all of political powers as purely Islamist. Indeed, the constitution was described as "the

most Islamic in Egypt's history" (Lavi, 2012). It couldn't be missed that the constitution perfectly reflected the conception of Islamic identity in which the MB believed and what their fellow Salafis would accept. The MB was successful in imposing its will with regard to most articles of the constitution, while maintaining a show of moderation in comparison to the more extremist proposals rose by the Salafis. A lot of articles were strikingly provoking for liberal/secular opposition; among them were for example, Article 1, which dealt with Egypt's orientation. The article was amended to define the Egyptian people as part of the Islamic nation, a definition that did not appear in the previous constitution and was perceived as a prelude to transform Egypt-First identity to an Islamic one. While article 2, which defined Islam as the state religion" and "the principles of Islamic sharia as the main source of legislation, remained intact, a new article (219) was added to clarify Article 2, and it stated that the principles of Islamic sharia refers to the general methods of juridical argumentation, to fundamental juridical rules and principles, and to the sources recognized by the Sunni juridical schools. Article 219 broadened the reading and interpretation of article 2 thus creating the space for a wider implementation of sharia based procedures as well as the requirement for issuing legislations that confirm to the Sunni law. The article was intended to appease the Salafis and to dispel the charges leveled against the MB that it had abandoned implementing the sharia by its opposition to the amendment of Article 2. Article 219 also allowed the codification of the sharia and enabled discrimination against all who are not Sunni Muslims, including Shi'ites. Among other controversial articles, there was one that stated that Al-Azhar's Supreme Council of Clerics is to be consulted in matters pertaining to Islamic law – a notion that was present in the platform of the MB's Freedom and Justice Party. This aimed at forcing the Supreme Constitutional Court, after being the sole body with the authority to interpret the laws and determine whether they are in line with the constitution, to share this authority with Al Azhar when it comes to matters pertaining to sharia based laws (Lavi 2012).

Unrest grew all over Egypt, with the official institutions attempt to publicly humiliate Morsi and show him as incompetent, helpless and weak. For example, when violence erupted in Port Said at the backdrop of court's verdicts condemning some citizens of Port Said for the Port Said Stadium Riots in February 2012, Morsi imposed a curfew in Port Said. The army then, which was responsible for implementing the curfew, went on to break the curfew, organising a football contest for the settlements in the Canal Zone. Furthermore, Marshall (2015) stressed the slow response of the armed forces after Morsi gained power. A prime example was in early 2013, when the East Port Said site and Ain Sukhna, a Red Sea port, were closed for three days due to workers' strikes and rallies. Various operators ended up docking in Israel instead. Discussion between labour union

representatives and the management eventually re-opened the sites. However, the dispute settlement had not been fulfilled by 2014, leading to renewed labour unrest. With Sisi in power, this time the armed forces broke the strike through force, while standing in to unload the ships. To Marshall, this suggested that the Egyptian armed forces were intentionally and methodically attempting to undermine President Morsi and the MB regime, through complicating the economic quandaries the administration faced (p.8-9). The army and the MB-led government seemed to be on the verge of a very visible conflict, as the former attempted to reassert the influence it had over the state during the Mubarak era, while the latter tried to enhance its legitimacy as guardian of the civil, modern Egyptian state.

By the summer of 2012, everyone in Egypt knew that Morsi might not finish his tenure. A loose, wide alliance between almost all political powers in Egypt emerged with the sole aim of ousting the MB and Morsi from the rule of Egypt. The MB, which mobilised their supporters more than once to counterbalance the anti-Morsi demonstrations, started a sit-in in the pivotal *Rabaa Al-Adawiya* Square in Cairo. The anti-MB alliance declared that its banner was democracy (to restore democracy), the real objective was the vague slogan of saving Egypt from Islamisation and foreign hegemony, as the MB was accused and depicted as a mere pawn of a wide international conspiracy against Egypt. The anti-Morsi alliance saw a strong rallying together of nationalist forces, including the military, the internal security and intelligence forces, the business community, as well as civilian officials and NDP politicians from the Mubarak era (Dunne 2015).

The *Tamarod* (Rebellion) Movement was established with the sole aim of forcing Morsi to call to early presidential elections. *Tamarod*, an Egyptian grassroots movement with allegedly close ties to the intelligence (Meky 2015; Shams ElDin 2014), aimed to collect 15 million signatures by 30th of June 2013, the one-year anniversary of Morsi's inauguration. *Tamarod* was led by one of the controversial figures from the revolutionary youth, a journalist called Mahmoud Badr, who was known to be specially close to army and police senior figures (Gresh 2013). The movement announced it collected more than 22 million signatures (22,134,460) as of 29th of June 2013. Mahmoud Badr stated that after *Tamarod* collected millions of signatures of Egyptians, he told Sisi, the then-minister of defence: "I tell you, sir, you may be the general commander of the Egyptian army but the Egyptian people are your supreme commander, and they are immediately ordering you to side with their will and call an early presidential election" (Gresh 2013). However, the number claimed was never verified by an independent source, especially the rise in number by millions in few days. The leader of the wide anti-MB alliance, in the shadows, was the deep state (Whitehead 2015, p.18).

Simultaneously, on the media level, the political attack on the MB was carried through a different kind of state's media. It is noteworthy that the state was able for the first time since years in creating and/or sponsoring new media figures that were capable of counter-balancing the far advanced position of the Islamist and revolutionary media. One particular media figure, Tawfiq Okasha, a television presenter and the owner and principal anchor of the satellite political-commentary channel *Al-Faraeen* (The Pharaohs), deserves special attention as an obvious example for the legitimacy contest's techniques. In front of the sweeping advancement of the new media over the traditional formal state's media, the security services, after the collapse of the Mubarak regime, apparently, decided not to compete with new media in its own field. Rather, the deep state found it would be better to enhance its legitimacy among its natural constituencies: Al-Aghlabbeyya Assamta (the silent majority). The term was often used in the state's press to denote that are parts of the population that 'silently' support the state. The phrase generally meant the peasants, workers, bureaucratic lower and middle classes, and a part of the informal sectors that are busy working than revolting. With developing a persona, Tawfiq Okasha was the only media figure in years that could certainly penetrate and influence large segments of the aforementioned groups and mobilise them, first, against the January uprising itself, and later, against the MB. In November 2011, Okasha called for demonstrations to support the SCAF against the 'chaos's powers' which aims at destroying Egypt. At that time, this was the first pro-state demonstration ever to take place and find thousands of supporters who were concerned with the continuous deterioration of the conditions of living. Okasha's role continued to grow, based on his unique *baladi* (popular) persona that used to grab the attention of nearly all Egyptians. Through his *baladi* way of constructing a narrative (that is basically built on conspiracy theories against Egypt in which the army is the sole defender of the state), Okasha created a wave among some segments of the population, basically the SMC, against both the MB and the January uprising itself (Aboulenein 2012; Sakr 2013).

During much of June 2013, Egypt appeared to be on a brink of explosion, with the media and the street vehemently attacking Morsi and the MB, along with the MB enlarging its sit-in in *Rabaa* Square. Violent clashes erupted in several Egyptian governorates between pro- and anti-MB supporters. Meanwhile, army leaders reached out to the leader of Salafism and induced them not to stand with the MB. Salafi leaders were told: "with or without you, the MB is now history and Morsi will not finish his tenure. If you supported a transition, a role for you will be guaranteed" (U.G 2013). On the 30th of June 2013, mass demonstrations erupted all over Egypt under the protection of the army and the police. Millions of Egyptians were mobilised in the streets amidst hysterical ultra-nationalist sentiments.

When Morsi and the MB refused to negotiate, the army, which has issued an ultimatum and started a count down asking the President to yield to the popular will, intervened and arrested Mohamed Morsi and declared the statement of the 3rd of July 2013, with representatives of all political, social and religious powers in the background blessing the declaration of a new transitional phase (BBC n.d.). The army, under the leadership of General Abdel Fatah Al-Sisi, declared a road map that suspended the 2012 constitution, appointed former Chief Justice Adli Mansour as the interim president and decided that a new constitution will be written, a new presidential elections to be held and then a new parliamentary elections will take place.

During the crisis that ended by ousting Morsi, two opposing legitimacy discourses were obvious. On one hand, Morsi kept emphasising that he has democratic legitimacy. In one of his speeches a day before his removal from power, he reiterated the word ‘legitimacy’ 56 times (YouTube 2013b). For Morsi, legitimacy was based on one source; i.e. electoral democracy. On the other hand, the opposition discourse of legitimacy highlighted other sources of legitimacy, namely ideological, to be more important than Morsi’s democratic legitimacy which they didn’t argue against. Indeed, that was motivated by the experience of the last two years’ events which emphasised that there was another battle in Egypt aside from the battle for democracy which was the battle for identity. As was explained in the 1st chapter of this thesis, although democratic legitimacy is a crucial component of institutional legitimacy, which is the arguably the most stable source of legitimacy, the case was different in Egypt. The brief democratic experience of 2011-2013 proved that democratic legitimacy, if not based on solid basis of identity consensus, is not sufficient to keep the stability of a political regime.

7.4 Negative legitimacy: security for consent

Following on from Morsi’s deposition from power, the forces that had rallied against the MB, maintained their positions of influence. However, two opposing sides have emerged which have congealed around a ‘ultra-nationalist’ sentiment- those who are in favour of Egypt-First identity, a powerful security state and armed forces involvement in government- and a pro-democratic one, who question the dominant role of the armed forces in structures of government and the emphasis on securitisation. The first government and cabinet after 30th of June contained figures from both sides. The nationalists were represented by such individuals as Minister of the Interior Muhamad Ibrahim, Local Development Minister Adel Labib, Minister for Aviation Abdel Aziz Fadel and Minister for Housing Ibrahim Mehleb. The Liberal faction had the Vice President Mohamed

ElBaradei, Minister of Foreign Affairs Nabil Fahmy, as well as Prime Minister Hazem Beblawi and the Deputy Prime Minister Ziad Bahaa Eldin. Traditional news sources also generally represented either side.

However, the most influential figure in Egypt at the time, indeed, was General Sisi. After removing the MB from power, Sisi attempted to contain and force them to accept a secondary role in the new political system that was being shaped. The MB, outraged by what they considered as illegitimate coup d'état, refused to negotiate and enlarged their sit-in in *Rabaa* Square. Thousands of Salafis refused their leaders' bids not to join the MB's sit-in and they did. The discourse of Morsi's supporters in *Rabaa* Square, and on a lesser extent in *Al-Nahda* Square in Giza, ceased to pretend being democratic. Calls for revenge, threatening of terrorist acts, and installing an Islamist state were prevalent (Farghaly 2014; Al-Qadi 2014). Indeed, the MB at the time realised that it had to go back to its main constituency; the Islamists, after it had lost the support of millions of non-Islamist Egyptians who took to the streets against the group after they have voted for it twice. The anti-MB media exploited the *Rabaa* discourse creating an image of panic all across Egypt. Thus, non-Islamist parts of the population were in rage over the MB and their virtual 'occupation' of Nasr City, the Cairene suburb that has *Rabaa* Square in its center. Again, polarisation reached a new height and fascist voices rose demanding cleansing the square altogether (SadaElbalad 2013). Even some of the most influential revolutionary figures, e.g. Alaa Abdel Fattah and his mother Laila Soueif, demanded the police to disperse the sit-in in Al-Nahda Square, confirming it is an armed sit-in and the protestors are killing innocent citizens (YouTube 2013a). After several failed attempts, internally and externally, to convince the MB to end their sit-ins in *Rabaa* and *al-Nahda* squares, the government decided to disperse it by force.

On 14 August 2013, Egyptian police moved to disperse the camps. While the smallest *Nahda* Square's sit in was dispersed in less than an hour, the main sit-in in *Rabaa* took a whole day and a lot of blood was shed. While numbers of death casualties are unconfirmed, most estimates from the state side and NGOs side referred to that around 1000 MB members were killed and around 10 from the police forces. The fact-finding commission report stated the killing of around 700 from the MB and 8 from the Police. The report also confirmed that the sit-in was armed and the first murdered was from the police (Aboul-Ghiet & Abdallah 2013; WikiThawra 2013; NCHR 2014).

Indeed, *Rabaa's* events was a decisive event not only after the January uprising, but may be in Egypt's modern history. It has been compared only to Mohamed Ali's Massacre of the Citadel against the Mamluks. *Rabaa's* massacre was indeed a moment of extreme political violence, whether justified or not, its impact on the legitimacy of the state was profound. The *Rabaa* Square massacre

could be described as a “politically defining moment” (Alagappa 1995a, p.46). It indeed created a status of personal vendetta between a section of the population and the state. While, for example, the victims of other violent use of force from the state were indiscriminate, in *Rabaa* it was exclusively directed against the Islamists and the MB particularly. For them, the legitimacy of the state was indeed lost and they publicly declared that they consider the state as an occupying power and called publicly to topple its institutions including even the financial ones. Immediately after *Rabaa*, the MB’s supporters attacked and destroyed 21 police stations all over Egypt and 4 churches. Events of mass terror took place in the country with violent clashes between the police and army from one side and the MB’s supporters on the other side. On the other hand, the *Rabaa* sit-in, and the aftermath of *Rabaa*’s dispersal was a reason for most of the 30th June block to consider the MB as the ‘enemy of the state’ which have to be faced by all means including extremely lethal ones.

As a consequence of the *Rabaa* events, discord grew within the alliance of June 30th. The VP Mohamed ElBaradei resigned in objection of the dispersal of the MB’s sit-ins by violent means that he was opposed. ElBaradei preferred a more patient approach by the government. ElBaradei’s resignation was the start signal to the democratic wing of June 30th coalition to start demonstrating their objection to the approach of the new post-MB regime. At a meeting of the cabinet in November 2013, discord flared over the Protest Law between Minister of the Interior Ibrahim and Deputy Prime Minister Ziad Bahaa Eldin, resulting in its implementation being sidetracked. The democrats expressed reservations on the law, while the nationalists had backed it. Further disagreements rose over whether to allow the MB to return to the political arena, which was advocated by the democrats while being dismissed by the nationalists.

Although Sisi’s ‘revolution’ was formally claimed to be a revolution for democracy, in reality it was depicted and understood as a movement to get rid of the MB and the idea of theocratic rule. Thus, Sisi’s supporters consistently asked for absolute rule under Sisi’s leadership (and hence the army). The spread of terrorism in Egypt after the ousting of Morsi, granted Sisi what could be termed as “negative legitimacy” (Alagappa 1995b, p.61). It could be argued that this is a kind of legitimacy which is based on protecting the population from an imminent threat; i.e. terrorism. It is not based on active acceptance of the population to the regime’s right to rule. Negative legitimacy follows the same logic that was carved out by Nasser after the 1967 War with Israel: ‘*la sawt ya’lou fawq sawt al-ma’raka*’ (No voice should be louder than that of the battle [with Israel]). However, in this time the battle was with a part of the Egyptian society, the MB, not an external power. The nature of the enemy this time, the MB, demanded specific costs, among them was antagonising the foreign powers that supported the MB, namely Hamas in Gaza, Qatar and Turkey, and even the US,

which the state's media considered responsible of managing an international conspiracy with the aim of restructuring the map of the Middle East and establishing a second Sykes-Picot Agreement (Bakri 2013; El-Alfi & Eissa 2015).

Indeed, the years following the January uprising, with the accompanying economic deterioration, loss of jobs, and rise of crimes rate and chaos, led to an erosion in the popularity of democracy as a source of legitimacy. The words of the late VP Omar Soliman on democracy was often recalled: "everybody wants democracy, but when? Are we prepared for democracy?" To this he answered: "Egypt is not prepared for democracy" (Anon 2013). The position of the Sisi regime on democracy was echoed widely in the street, with most of the society losing faith in democracy, the Islamists and non-Islamists alike, each for its own reasons. The state's discourse thus started to focus, again, on two axes: war on terror, in Sinai, and against *Aadaa Al-Watan* (enemies of the country), namely the MB, and, secondly, on re-building the state, in economic terms. This logic was accurately depicted by the words of a common man of Sisi's supporters: "We are building the country up from zero; Egypt is being reborn. It's too early to talk about people's democratic demands. We have to save the state first" (Trew 2015).

The deposition of Morsi in June 2013 was enabled through a rejuvenation of populist, Nasserist-like sentiments (Dunne, 2015). The growing populism rested on an anti-Islamist and xenophobic platform, with a significant role for the armed forces. Such populism ran contrary to the pluralistic sentiments that characterised the 2011 uprising. The Nasserite pro-Sisi intelligentsia framed the challenge to the MB in the form of a fight for national independence against Western and U.S. influence (which the MB was supposedly their client. Chulov (2013) remarked Sisi appeared often in his military Full Dress Uniform complete with medals, recalling his position as head of the Egyptian military; Nasser's image, with his set-jaw, moustache, unfathomable grin and attractive features, often seemed juxtaposed by Sisi's sincere, resolute and freshly shaven face. Also, Sisi had the additional assistance of favourable coverage from non-public outlets. Their enemies and supposed external backers were derided, while militarism as well as cultural references were used to elevate his own standing. Various Militaristic records such as 2013's *Teslam al-ayadi* – may those hands be safe- were Internet sensations (Khairy 2014). The nationalists, xenophobic, militaristic and populist ideas were able to exploit Egyptian weariness following the intense upheaval since 2011. Nationalist feeling, which recalled Nasser's era, seemed to pervade Egypt following President Morsi's deposition, with Nasserist parallels in the championing of the figurehead, Minister of Defence Sisi. This was made blatant in the public placards featuring Nasser and Sisi, the common drawing of similarities between the two, not to mention the confectionary and lamps for Ramadan featuring his image (Dunne, 2015).

On the contrary, other pro-Sadat intellectuals denounced the Palestinian Hamas movement (as an affiliation of the MB) and other movements such as Hezbollah (as subordinates to Iran), evoking Sadat's anti-Arabs terminology in the late 1970s. It was indeed a hybrid form of Egyptian nationalism that contained many contradictions and one common factor: the utilisation of the high level of acceptance that the army enjoys in the Egyptian street. It was obvious that, for a significant portion of the public especially the commoners, the army was the trust worthiest of all political powers in the country. Stacher (2007) provided an understanding of this situation, in that the Armed Forces have had a particular romanticised position in the national consciousness, since 1952 (p.72). With fifty years between Nasser and Sisi's attempts to cement their popularity, Dunne took the similarities between their efforts as an indication that Egypt's underlying nationalistic spirit had endured, which in part rested on a quite commonly held confidence in the armed forces. Furthermore, these nationalistic feelings could be exploited by leaders to take exceptional action during apparent crises (Dunne, 2015).

Thus, the populist forces, centred on the army, had re-asserted their dominance, albeit with internal tensions emerging. The secularist and salafist forces, which supported the June 30th uprising, had been sidelined or even barred from participation. Nevertheless, the post-MB regime continued applying the road map that the army designed after June 30th. In January 2014, the new constitution that was drafted by a new CA, appointed by the interim President Adly Mansour, was put to popular vote. It was declared that the turnout in the constitutional referendum was 38.5% of which almost 20 million voted yes (turnout of 98%). In May 2014, Sisi was elected as the new President of Egypt. The official results of the elections showed that 24.5 million Egyptians voted (47.5% turnout), of which Sisi gained 23.78 million (97%) while his competitor Hamdeen Sabahi obtained around one million votes (3%). In December 2015, a new parliament was elected, in which the state-linked 'For the Love of Egypt' list won the majority of seats (Linn 2016).

However, all post-June 30th elections witnessed intensive mobilisational efforts by the state and social forces allied to the army. In the absence of the most organised group in the country, the MB, it was possible for the state to mobilise its supporters, in addition to large numbers of commoners who went to elect Sisi, his constitution and his parliament 'to save Egypt'. It was revealed that the security services, namely the GIS, had, for the first time publicly, convened meetings in its premises to coordinate between the various pro-Sisi groups (Abdel Azim 2016). The state's intervention in politics, backed by loud propaganda and intense populist sentiments, continued to shape this period. Ideological legitimacy apparently swept all other sources of legitimacy when there was perceived threat to the very existence of the state. However, the

repression of the MB and its supporters was widespread and extended to include various elements even beyond the MB from the liberal opposition whose discontent with the status of human rights under Sisi was growing.

It is indeed too early at the time of writing these lines to formulate a definitive statement on the nature and level of legitimacy of Egypt's current President, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi. As discussed, negative legitimacy is the main mode of legitimacy in Egypt since chaos, terrorism erupted in the Arab Middle East in general and partly in Egypt in particular. However, negative legitimacy is indeed not a permeant or reliable source of legitimacy. If Sisi is to establish a new, stable political regime, he would soon have to work on building more stable sources of legitimacy.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter argues that there is a vacuum of legitimacy and that the main theme of political struggle in Egypt is searching for legitimacy. Instead of establishing democratic rule as the January uprising demanded, it was possible for other non-democratic forces to revitalise other sources of legitimacy, namely ideological legitimacy, and transform the political struggle in Egypt from democrats/non-democrats to patriots/traitors and secularists/Islamists. This was continued with a strong revival of nationalism and what could be called 'negative legitimacy'. Negative legitimacy means the acceptance of population to the ruler's right to rule for the security that he offers to the country in face of imminent threats and in relation to other similar countries; i.e. the 'Arab Spring' countries. This type of legitimacy is indeed instable and short-term.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

This thesis studied the legitimacy crisis of the postcolonial Egyptian state. It aimed to show that through studying legitimacy; the reasons and dynamics behind the regime change and the underlying logic of political change in Egypt could be understood. To achieve this goal, this thesis analysed the concept of legitimacy from a structuralist-Weberian approach. It has been shown that there are different levels/types of consent, with different levels of influence, between the ruled and the ruler. It was argued that three basic types of legitimacy could be identified as the most crucial in terms of their impact on political change in Egypt: eudaemonic, institutional, and ideological legitimacy. Several implications were concluded from the research.

8.1 Implications of the Research:

8.1.1 The First Implication

The relative weights of the abovementioned legitimacy components vary from one state-formation's phase to the other, as every phase structurally determines which component is more important than the other, or, in other words, the phase of state formation invites the relevant type of legitimacy component for the ruler to rely on. However, each ruler indeed can choose the proper legitimacy type that fits the state-formation's phase the country is going through, or avoid it and use, to the detriment of his rule, other legitimacy types. For example, immediately after independence in 1952, Egypt was a country that needs to recover from occupation and severe underdevelopment. Egyptians looked primarily for independence, economic development, and social justice. Accordingly, in this phase of state formation, more relative importance was to be given to eudaemonic legitimacy that addresses economic advancement, as well as ideological legitimacy with its attachment to nationalism and patriotic sentiments. Nasser deeply understood the state formation's phase which his country was going through and responded effectively with the policies and orientations that granted him the highest levels of legitimacy ever enjoyed by a ruler in postcolonial Egypt. The third major source of legitimacy, institutional, was not a priority in postcolonial Egypt and Nasser was able to rule almost peacefully without the need to rely upon it.

During Nasser's years, the national independence of Egypt was consolidated and rooted in reality; it was no longer an issue of conflict, however other variables became of question and effect like the tension between Egypt and Israel and the cost Egypt had to pay for its anti-imperial policies which is the war with Israel and the defeat of the Egyptian army in the 1967 War. Adding to this was the statist development strategy followed by Nasser, which failed to sustain the welfare state. These two variables played a role in reshaping a different state-formation's phase, from looking for independence and achieving economic 'renaissance' to disengagement with Israel and achieving economic growth at the expense of social justice. The disengagement with Israel required a change in the employed policies that encouraged and gave primacy to Arab nationalism. Shifting to a more self-focus approach, the Egypt-First identity emerged. This has indeed caused a decrease in the state's moral legitimacy with the ideational legitimacy eroding. Accordingly, Sadat and Mubarak tended to rely more on institutional legitimacy, making up for what's lost of ideational legitimacy to sustain the ethical presence and moral legitimacy of the regime. The rise in institutional legitimacy appeared in the introduction of democracy, the emphasis on the State of Law and Institutions, the opening in political parties' formation, and the enhanced freedom of speech relative to the semi-open society that Sadat laid its foundation and Mubarak championed. On the level of the patron state legitimacy, more focus has been directed to economic growth more than development. This was to be achieved through the *infitah* policy. The consequences of this direction were to, indeed, weaken the patron-state's legitimacy.

To sum it up, this thesis's first implication is that legitimacy could not be understood as one unified box. It is better understood as a political currency that is derived from different sources. The relative weight and importance of each source differs through time. What decides the relative weight of each source of legitimacy is the nature of the state-formation's phase through which the state is going.

8.1.2 The Second Implication

The second implication tackles when the regime's legitimacy will fall and when will it be strong. This thesis argues that this depends on the criteria that the regime sets for itself. For example, in the phase of national independence after 1952, Nasser was clear that pursuing liberal democracy was not among his declared goals. Nasser's main goals were independence and development, and people held him only accountable to this. This means that the regime sets its legitimacy criteria for itself and based on them people will judge whether the regime failed or succeeded in fulfilling its

self-set criteria (that indeed should be matching with the specific phase of state-formation as explained in the first implication).

Accordingly, the Egyptian people in general during Nasser's era did not appear to be that upset from the absence of democracy. Even though the elitist opposition –mainly -has raised issues of democracy and refused the state of intelligence, but the majority of the population were only focused on achieving independence and social justice, which Nasser appeared working on successfully through nationalizing the Suez Canal, empowering the Arab nation, turning Egypt into a regional and international power, etc. Nasser was successful to consolidate his legitimacy grounded on the criteria that he set for his regime. It was the same in the economy where he delivered what he promised as the state was in control of employing the people, prices of goods and commodities, rent, and real estate. Though the development pace was slowed and actually in some turns deteriorated, but the people still did not blame Nasser and held him accountable for this, because he still appeared as honest, fully devoted and working dedicatedly on what he promised. His speech was always centered on equal opportunities and achieving welfare for the poor and disadvantaged. Mixed with his personal charisma, Nasser was judged by Egyptians as a legitimate leader who is doing the best he can for his nation. He was then forgiven for the results of the 1967 War and the loss of the Sinai, and millions of Egyptians took to the streets, on the 9th and 10th of June 1967, to convince him not to step down. In the same context, Sadat had no options but to put less weight in the ideational legitimacy with its Arab national components. He fed the “Egypt First” identity approach with concentration on the interest of Egypt as a modern nation-state. He changed the discourse of the state from focusing on Arab conflicts and causes to Egypt's sole interest, defined on a narrow basis. Because of this, people did accept the changes that he enforced on the country in several dimensions even though its cost was high for Sadat himself. But people generally accepted Sadat's chauvinistic approach and agreed to his logic which was, regardless true or untrue, simple and convincing for many: ‘We have gained nothing but devastation, defeats, martyrs, ruin and poverty from our engagement in Arab problems. Now it is the time for Egypt to be only Egyptian and care only for Egypt. Through this way, prosperity and development will be achieved’. Unlike Sadat, Mubarak employed a dual strategy, which would have drastic effects on his legitimacy. While, on the discourse level, the state under Mubarak, particularly until the end of the 20th century, reverted to some extent to the Nasserite-like discourse which focused on Arabism and adopting the resolution of Arab conflicts, the actual state policies and approaches deviated from this direction. This resulted in creating a trust gap between the state –manifested in the president – and the people. This even aggravated to accusing the presidency of indulging in conspiracies and less support to

Arab countries. It was not understood for many Egyptians why Egypt, for example, participated as was widely broadcasted by the propaganda of Al-Jazeera TV and other powerful media outlets, in the siege of Gaza in the Gaza War in 2008/9, while the President and the state's official discourse are still championing the Palestinian cause and claiming Egypt's leadership on the region.

However, and as it was explained earlier in this conclusion, Mubarak's most important component of legitimacy was institutional legitimacy rather than ideational legitimacy. The disastrous turn in Mubarak's legitimacy thus aroused when Mubarak adopted the notion of partial political pluralism as a base for his ruling and legitimacy. Mubarak's focus was on showing that Egypt is witnessing its best democratic phase with freedom of speech and expression. This has raised the expectations and ambitions of the population in this direction, especially when he started to invest more through introducing and operating the mechanisms of democracy such as multi-candidate presidential elections. The people held him accountable for what he promised. What happened in fact was that he was widely accused and believed to be working on inheriting presidency to his son, Gamal Mubarak. This implication can be further demonstrated in post 2011 with the entrance of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) into the formal political reality in Egypt, as they came to power through democratic elections, with the first Egyptian civil elected president, Muhammad Morsi. Hence, their holding them accountable for democracy was even much higher than that of Mubarak as they came with real democratic elections. With this high level of accountability and with the first attempt to misuse democracy by the MB when they announced a non-democratic constitutional declaration that gave President Morsi massive powers, their legitimacy instantly smashed in the Egyptian streets. Similarly, Presidents Sisi's succession to power was based on 'saving' Egypt from Political Islam, which appeared as a by-product of the MB coming to power. His basic legitimacy discourse thus was based on preventing the theocratic and 'fascist' rule of the MB, but not basically on a contractual agreement with the people on democracy or human rights.

Thus, putting the first and second implications together, it is argued that legitimacy is driven by 1) how far the regime legitimacy formula is congruent with perceived needs of state formation at a given stage, and 2) how far the elites actually deliver on their legitimacy claims.

8.1.3 The Third Implication:

Nasser, as the founder and most powerful ruler of postcolonial Egypt, created benchmarks of legitimacy that his predecessors found themselves obliged to, at least, not to ignore, otherwise

facing the wrath of the people. Thus, the transition from Populist Authoritarianism (PA) to post-Populist Authoritarianism (PPA) was indeed attached with decline of the ruling regime's legitimacy. However, it is vital to note that this transformation (from PA To PPA) was not inevitable to make the regime lose all its legitimacy altogether. It is thus argued that the post-Nasser state in Egypt was not void of legitimacy. There has been indeed a legitimacy crisis caused, by the outcomes of the 1967 war and the economic dilemma, however, Sadat and Mubarak, respectively, laid out and consolidated the foundations of a new synthesis to compensate for the lack in the state's legitimacy as formulated by Nasser, the father of the Egyptian contemporary state.

The legitimacy's formula of Nasser went under deep transformation under Sadat. Sadat's choices were framed as reactions to the structural problems, which Egypt faced after Nasser, namely the war with Israel and the economic crisis. In both these fields, and in addition institutional legitimacy, Sadat attempted to set up new standards of legitimacy to justify the new political regime that he aimed to establish. However, he could not destroy the old formula of Nasser. The state strategy under Sadat then, and to a larger extent under Mubarak, could be described, as "a dual strategy" (Shehata 2010, p.30). It sought to legitimise itself in the eyes of its new constituencies by new parameters of legitimacy, while attempting in the same time to meet the old legitimacy standards to keep other social constituencies contained or at least un-mobilisable by the opposition. The result of this strategy was a discourse that greatly depends on the Nasserist criteria of legitimacy and, simultaneously, policies and material actions that contradict its supposedly legitimising discourse. Consequently, a gap was created between discourse and policy. This gap, which would increasingly grow under Mubarak, would be afterwards one of the main reasons of the January 2011 uprising.

The postpopulist state's dualism was a result of the gap between the high legitimacy standards set by Nasser and the impossibility of achieving them due to Egypt's real socioeconomic situation. Unable to face the masses that the mental image of the military powerful and economically prosperous Egypt, drawn by Nasser, could not be achieved in reality, Sadat was obliged to maintain the minimum discourse and policies that would keep the populist alliance created by Nasser coherent and away from the opposition mobilization. The only time Sadat attempted to abandon one of the major tenets of populism; i.e. relieving food subsidies in January 1977, resulted in mass protests that threatened the very existence of the regime altogether. At the same time, the need for the bourgeoisie's cooperation, and reconciliation with the West and Israel, required—controlled—liberalisation of the economic and political sphere. This dual strategy, which is to be a major feature of the PPA phase, proved even more effective in dealing with the opposition, as it allowed the state

to shift part of the political conflict in the society to become among the opposition factions themselves and not between the state and the opposition. This ‘divide and rule’ strategy was, and to be, a major feature of the Egyptian political life until the few years before 2011.

8.1.4 The Fourth Implication

In Egypt, social forces are created/strengthened and destructed/weakened as a result mainly of the states’ policies. This is pertinent to the formation of legitimacy as legitimacy is often granted from a specific social force(s) and not from the entire population. After the 1952 revolution, the Egyptian president was faced by a society classified into a bourgeois class that owns the capital, a small middle class – to which Nasser and the free officers belonged to-, and a wide lower class. Based on the sizes of the classes, the states’ policies intended to raise the lower classes into the middle class, principally through employing them into the public sector and the state’s bureaucratic apparatus. The legitimacy of Nasser, then, was basically relied on the support of the ‘Nasserite’ middle class, which rose with Nasser and declined after him. This class gave support and full loyalty to Nasser and his regime at this time. The bureaucratic class adopted a mindset that was founded on loyalty, dependence, and belonging to the state. Sadat in the transitional phase and with the infitah he introduced, created a new class that we can name the business bourgeois class, which was still partially attached to the state.

The importance of shedding the light on social classes is to show the new middle class that emerged in the Egyptian society as a result of the structural economic reform, which started in the 1990s. This class was the first in the Egyptian social history to be fully independent/disconnected from the state and its one of the most important dynamics contributing to the 2011 uprising. The mentality and values of this middle class’s generation expanded to be a cultural wave that also affected even those who are still dependent and connected to the state. This new middle class had a complete different value system that viewed the state as a dependent and not otherwise; collecting taxes but providing low quality public services and non-existent social services, etc. With all this, this class had a different view and concept about the legitimacy of the state. It was not only for the SMC that the Mubarak regime’s legitimacy stood weak with what they viewed as a deterioration in the prestige of the state and its patron power that reflected on their living and welfare and did not match their social status and education, but also the young generation (NMC) viewed the regime as weak and fragile because of its lack of democracy and disrespect for human rights, which was considered by them the reason of the overall deterioration of Egypt. Parallel to this, the MB and

Salafis invested in shifting their power base from the lower middle class to the wider urban middle classes with a different discourse that attributes state's deterioration and weakness to deviating from Islam and the rule of Sharia.

Thus, it could be argued that for an authoritarian regime to be able to exclude some parts of the population it must be able to include a constituency that sees it as legitimate. But the regime creates constituencies by its policies, so authoritarian regimes are not just based on coercion and can even be inclusive, but always also some segments are excluded.

8.1.5 The Fifth Implication

The collapse of the political sphere after the opening caused by the January uprising was caused by many factors with the limitations of democratic legitimacy on the top of them. Without a wide consensus on the state identity and the limits of the use of power, electoral democracy helps only to embody the deep divisions in the nation especially on the identity lines. Therefore, in Egypt post-Mubarak, the secular/Islamist division grew and dominated all other themes including the dichotomy of democracy/authoritarianism. Through the alliance of the secular parts of the January uprising with the army, it was possible for the army under Sisi to gain leverage in the street and for the state to recover its lost power. A new sort of 'negative legitimacy' appeared to fill in the legitimacy gap for sometime. Indeed, it is temporary and would need support from other, more stable, sources of legitimacy.

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